



The Emergence of Populist Style: Pavel Ivanovich Iakushkin

The mission of thought is to construct archtypes; I mean, to point out from among those infinite figures that reality presents those in which, because of their greater purity, that reality becomes clearer.

—José Ortega y Gasset, *Meditations on Hunting*

Chernyshevsky's "civil execution" took place on May 19, 1864, at eight o'clock in the morning, on Customs House Square in St. Petersburg.¹ After his arrest in the summer of 1862, he had been sentenced to seven years' hard labor in Siberia and banishment there for life. Despite his influential radical journalism and his involvement with active revolutionary groups, the evidence against him had been insufficient, and the government had been forced to use forged letters from an agent provocateur to convict him. Chernyshevsky had been confined in the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul for almost two years prior to his appearance in the square on that rainy May morning.

The civil execution was a barbarous but purely symbolic ceremony. Before a member of the gentry could be punished for a major offense, he had to be formally stripped of his civil rights, guaranteed to him under the Charter of the Nobility issued by Catherine the Great in 1785. The ceremony consisted of the reading of the sentence, followed by the breaking of a wooden

sword over the head of the criminal. He was then led off in chains.

Chernyshevsky was very well known in St. Petersburg, and the crowd assembled in the square was large. It was made up of high army officers and fancy ladies and ordinary citizens, many of whom had simply turned out for the show. There was also a large group of writers, students, bohemian intellectuals—many of whom had a precise admiration or vague ideological sympathy for the man who was to be “executed.” The scaffold was surrounded by a tight ring of soldiers, policemen, and civil guards. An avenue was kept clear for the carriage that would bring the prisoner to the scaffold. Umbrellas were everywhere, distracting the guards, who pressed the people back. As the sword was broken over Chernyshevsky’s head, it began to rain harder.

Suddenly there was an eddy in the crowd; a man was trying to force his way to the scaffold. He was small and wiry, with a pockmarked face, a full beard, and gold-rimmed glasses; he pushed his way almost to the platform before he was apprehended. He was wearing peasant costume: a red calico shirt, and wide velveteen trousers tucked into his worn boots. He explained heatedly, in a loud voice, that Chernyshevsky was a friend of his and he wanted to say good-bye. The guards crowded around him; still arguing, he shouted that everyone wanted to say good-bye, not just he alone.

An officer, who seemed to know him personally, tried to calm him down. “Pavel Ivanovich, Pavel Ivanovich,” he soothed, “it’s impossible.” And he muttered something about arranging to have the man say good-bye to Chernyshevsky later.

Then the bouquets and flowers began to fall on the scaffold. The first one was thrown by a young girl, who was immediately taken into custody and brought to a police station. The little man in the peasant costume followed her there and noisily claimed that he had thrown the bouquet. The policemen looked uncertainly from her to him. The police chief came out of his office and asked her calmly if she had thrown it, and if she had, who had told her to do it.

The girl collected herself and replied distinctly, "Yes, I threw the first bouquet, and I did it because I wanted to."

"Who convinced you to commit this act?" persisted the police chief.

"I decided to express my sympathy with an innocent man through the bouquet," said the girl melodramatically.

"Why do you think that Chernyshevsky is innocent?"

At this the girl became confused. "They said . . . I heard . . . it's generally known . . ."

The man in peasant clothes interrupted again. "As you can see, she's a child," he said impatiently. "She doesn't know what she's doing, taking this guilt on herself, when it was I who threw the first wreath. I order you," he said grandly, "to release her and arrest me."

Several policemen quickly confirmed the girl's account and said they had not seen the man at all. The chief smiled thinly at him. "You, Mr. Iakushkin," he said, "will please take yourself off. If your declaration is confirmed, you will be arrested—depend upon it—and not released."

"But I don't have an apartment," Iakushkin continued to argue. "Where will you look for me?"

"Don't disturb yourself about that. You're so obvious that you'll be found," the chief answered. "Go on, go on, wherever you like. Your declaration will be taken into account," he added ominously.

Iakushkin shrugged his shoulders, muttered something, and left the station house.²

That morning's work was, if not typical, at least characteristic of Pavel Ivanovich Iakushkin, ethnographer, writer, drunk, and thorn in the flesh of Russia's police. Iakushkin was a man about whom anecdotes multiplied and around whom legends grew like weeds. His contemporaries saw him as every kind of symbolic figure. To some—like the writer Nikolai Leskov—he was a modern incarnation of the Holy Fool, a pilgrim, a wanderer on the face of the earth. To many of the more general public, this scion of the gentry class who spent his time traveling on foot through

rural Russia, collecting songs, talking to peasants, and being arrested was an incarnation of "Old Russia," of the "essence of the Russian people," something little understood but much talked about. To still others, Iakushkin was the first *narodnik*—a man who had discovered that the way to the good life and good society of the future ran through the Russian peasant village. To the representatives of provincial officialdom whom he encountered on his travels in the countryside, however, Iakushkin embodied disorder, democracy—even revolution.

In a way, the provincial policemen who arrested and harassed Iakushkin were quite right. His way of life was a negation of the creed they lived by: order, hierarchy, bureaucratic formality, and petty venality. In a country and a time in which one's dress was an automatic indicator of rank and status, Iakushkin was the son of a landowner who spent his life in peasant costume. His travel documents were never in order, and he rarely had any money. He simply asked people—peasants in the country, students and intellectuals in the city—for what he needed. As he never needed much, he almost always got it: a bed for the night, or a warm room to write in.

Iakushkin had many friends and more acquaintances, although none of the close and lifelong variety. Chernyshevsky, for instance, was scarcely an intimate, despite the vociferous warmth of Iakushkin's public farewell. Iakushkin's "circle" ranged from respected dignitaries like Count Stroganov, curator of the Moscow Educational District, through a variety of writers, professors, and intellectuals of all political persuasions, to the doormen and tavernkeepers of St. Petersburg. And one should add "the Russian people," by which Iakushkin meant the Russian peasantry, from the Caspian Sea to the Baltic and the Ukraine. The peasants were for him a constituency, an object of affection and a source of moral value. Despite the diversity of his associations, Iakushkin treated everyone who crossed his path (except, perhaps, for Jews and policemen) in much the same curious, friendly, and natural fashion. It may be this casual egalitarianism that most deeply offended the official Russia of the day, which retaliated by destroying him.

In the early 1880s, a collection of Iakushkin's writings was published in St. Petersburg, and appended to it were reminiscences of him by friends and contemporaries. The 1880s were a decade of stagnancy and reaction in Russia; the presiding genii of the time were the wintry pessimist Konstantin Pobedonostsev and the Tsar-philistine Alexander III, who when he thought of the Jews always remembered the crucifixion. The volume of Iakushkiniana appeared at about the time that the *Annals of the Fatherland*—the last and most enduring of Russia's radical journals—was shut down by the government. It is striking how many of those who had known Iakushkin twenty or thirty years before, now, looking back from the reactionary tranquillity of the 1880s, regarded him as the embodiment of the new era, the fresh hopes that had stirred Russian society after the death of Nicholas I and the end of the Crimean War.

The "thaw" is a recurrent metaphor in Russian history, although Russian thaws tend to be of the January variety. And it was in this "thaw" after the Crimean War that Iakushkin became a figure, a personage, for a few brief years, before he was mutilated and destroyed by the great events, the high and low politics of the 1860s. Historians—of the Russian state, the revolutionary movement, of Russian literature—have by and large failed to remember him, and with reason. He played no great role, influenced the course of events slightly, if at all, and left no important literary legacy. Only in the history of folklore does he have a small, if secure, place as a collector. But even the crude outline of his life can help us feel what it was like to live through this remarkable period. Who was this "new man" who appeared in the literary-journalistic world of St. Petersburg in the spring of 1858? Where had he come from?

Iakushkin was born, on January 14, 1822, into a middle-gentry family of Orël province, several days' ride south of Moscow, in the heartland of Russia's gentry writers and men of letters.³ Turgenyev, Tolstoy, Leskov, the Kireevsky brothers, Marko Vovchok—all had their estates in the Tula-Orël area, and Iakushkin grew up in the rural landscape immortalized in *A Sportsman's Sketches*. His family, however, was an unusual one, and it

scarcely requires a psychohistorian or a peasant wisewoman to trace some of the scars left by the circumstances of his birth and childhood.

Pavel Ivanovich's father, Ivan Andreevich Iakushkin, provides a notable example of the kind of purposeless and debased life that circumstances made possible for the Russian gentry at the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth. Ivan Andreevich retired from the guards in his youth, after only six years of service, in 1781. In 1813, his elder brother died, leaving him, *inter alia*, a substantial estate, Saburovo, about seventy kilometers from Orël, where Ivan Andreevich was able to surrender himself to a career of debauchery impressive even in Russian gentry annals. The seduction of serf girls seems to have been his principal enthusiasm, and it was the most resolute and formidable of these peasant women who was Pavel Ivanovich's mother. At the age of fifteen, a peasant girl from Saburovo, one Praskov'ia Faleevna, presented the lord of the manor with a son, Aleksandr; three years later, Pavel was born, on January 14, 1822. Other children by other women were already on the scene, in the works, or yet to be; being illegitimate, none of them bore their father's name. At the time of the birth of his second son by Praskov'ia Faleevna, Ivan Andreevich Iakushkin was sixty-four years old.

For better or for worse, we have no way of knowing precisely how it was that Praskov'ia Faleevna managed to triumph over her rivals—not to mention the temperament of Ivan Andreevich—and become Madame Iakushkin and the mistress of Saburovo. Perhaps the attitude of his neighbors helped the "old bachelor" (as one Soviet historian calls him) to take this step. Perhaps his advancing age was a factor. In any case, Pavel's mother became Praskov'ia Faleevna Iakushkina just before the birth of her third child, Nikolai. Praskov'ia Faleevna—subsequently, at least—enjoyed, by all reports, the "respect" of her neighbors; the only surviving criticism of her character was that she had a tendency to be "despotic" and by no means objected to having the peasants beaten. Much as one might expect.

Ivan Andreevich died in 1832, at the age of seventy-four, hav-

ing sired his final son, Semën, only two years earlier. In view of the preoccupations of the master, it is not surprising that the economic foundations of the estate had become shaky. With Praskov'ia Faleevna's firm and capable hand at the helm, the situation improved; only subsequently, when Praskov'ia Faleevna was approaching sixty, did unmistakable signs of decay become evident. No doubt it was Praskov'ia Faleevna's peasant lack of sentimentality, her hardheadedness—together, perhaps, with a judicious deference—that so commended her to the local gentry.

As a writer and as a man, Iakushkin was little given to Romantic introspection and personal reflection; he never told his public how he felt about his father or his illegitimate birth. Neither he nor his brother Aleksandr (also illegitimate) was awarded gentry status; when he entered the University of Moscow, he was obliged to take with him a special document containing a physical description, as if he were a peasant. This is how we know that at the age of eighteen Iakushkin was just under five feet four inches tall, with red hair, dark red eyebrows, a pale complexion, and gray eyes. His only "distinguishing mark" was a mole on his cheek.

It is almost impossible to resist the proposition that Iakushkin's subsequent "going to the people," his love of the Russian peasant, was in some way related to his peasant mother and to a sense of his own special relationship to the peasantry. But we know nothing about his earliest years—until he entered the Orël gymnasium at the age of eleven—except the barest skeleton of family dates. A Soviet historian hopefully surmises a "democratic" childhood: his mother was much occupied with running the estate; therefore Pavel and his brothers were left with peasant nurses and peasant playfellows. This is probable enough, particularly in view of the special gift he showed at the gymnasium for coming out with long strings of peasant swear words in moments of stress. But one doubts that there was anything consciously peasant-oriented in the upbringing that Praskov'ia Faleevna gave her children; the opposite was more likely to be true. But situations of this kind are always complicated, and it may well be that

the first peasant songs Pavel heard came from his mother's lips.

At the Orël gymnasium, which he entered in 1833, we have the brief but helpful testimony of Nikolai Leskov, who followed Iakushkin through the school several years later.⁴ He tells us that Pavel Ivanovich was a character. He was known to his schoolmates as "Goat," and like many rebels since, he had hair trouble. The director of the gymnasium himself took unfavorable notice of Iakushkin's long hair, which sprouted from his head in unmanageable tufts, and put him on exhibit before the school as an example of how not to look. Pavel (and some of his admirers) were also given humiliating public haircuts for a while, but this kind of pedagogy soon had to be abandoned, since young Iakushkin would invariably resort to his "coarse peasant words," the audience would "die laughing," and the intended lesson would be lost in general hilarity. Furthermore, Leskov tells us, Iakushkin's tufts had an almost miraculous power of growth and renewal. Leskov compared him to a Tungus miracle worker, who could pass his hand over a slit belly and lo! it was healed. Seemingly within minutes of the end of the haircut, the disorderly tufts would reappear, undaunted. Thus Leskov, no doubt with the benefit of hindsight, sees Iakushkin's *prostonarodnost'* (which may be translated as "simple people-ness") as already clear. His German teacher called him a "little peasant doll."

Pavel did well at the gymnasium, although according to one source he had to repeat the seventh class because he was insolent. Whether he had a favorite teacher—the almost stock figure of the "good" (and radical) teacher laboring in the provinces—we do not know. Present on the faculty, however, was a man named V. P. Petrov, math teacher and friend of Alexander Herzen. The Soviet historian A. I. Balandin naturally suspects a connection here and sees Petrov kindling Iakushkin's interest in the sciences.⁵ Be that as it may, Pavel Ivanovich left the gymnasium in 1840 and enrolled at the University of Moscow, where his elder brother, Aleksandr, had preceded him.

The university, it soon became clear, was not Iakushkin's milieu, and mathematics was not his subject. It is doubtful that he finished and became a *Kandidat*. Nor did the great ideological

debates of the 1840s, the salon struggle between the Slavophiles and the Westerners, have much attraction for him. Indeed, at no time in his career was Iakushkin much interested in abstract ideas. He once told Leskov that he thought that theoretical socialism was "stupid," but it was really all one to him. "They'll have nothing to take away from me but my trousers," he observed carelessly. Nor does he appear to have been very interested in the Romantic, anti-industrial utopia of the Slavophiles. They read too many "little German books," he would remark contemptuously; he dismissed Konstantin Aksakov's ideas on government reform simply by remarking that he had "studied the Germans." To study the Germans meant to enter a realm of abstract ideas, to submit yourself to tedious philosophical formulations that had nothing to do with "life" or the real needs of anybody. And yet, despite his apparent ideological indifference—indeed, his innocence of ideology—there are serious grounds for considering Iakushkin a man of the "Left," as we shall see.

So the "great debate" of the 1840s—immortalized in Herzen's memoirs—passed him by. Or, rather, he passed it by. He had some acquaintance with the luminaries on both sides; he knew the Romantic-bohemian poet and critic Apollon Grigor'ev, as well as the "Westernizing" historians Sergei Solov'ev, Timofei Granovsky, and Konstantin Kavelin, but he remained obscure and in the shadows.

In fact, while Khomiakov and Ivan Kireevsky were dusting off the Eastern Fathers, while Belinsky was anathematizing reactionaries and philistines, Iakushkin was finding his calling. He was discovering—or rediscovering—rural Russia and the songs and tales of the Russian people. He came to his vocation gradually, with the assistance of two of the more prominent intellectual luminaries of the period: the conservative nationalist historian Mikhail Petrovich Pogodin and the Slavophile Pëtr Kireevsky, the first really serious collector of Russian folk songs, and perhaps the greatest.

Pëtr Vasil'evich Kireevsky was a remarkable man and in an indirect way an intellectually influential one, but he was so shy and self-effacing, so devoid of the ordinary forms of ambition and

egoism, that he remains even now in the shadows, as he did during his relatively brief life (1808–56).⁶ Like his brother, Ivan, he was a lonely man who found a kind of solace in the communalism of family life and in a few close friendships: with Ivan, with the poet Nikolai Iazykov. But even in these relationships, which were the heart of his emotional life, he was devoid of the assertive and demanding aspect of friendship, and he seemed to seek out a subsidiary role and position in relation to the objects of his attachment and operate from there. He never married, but took his brother's family for his own. When Iazykov was seriously ill for several years in the mid-1830s, Pëtr gave freely of his own time and energies, serving as traveling companion and nurse. Ivan Kireevsky was in many respects similar to his brother in his shyness, his emotional awkwardness, and his inability to complete projects and realize himself intellectually. Both brothers were to a degree overshadowed and intimidated by their brilliant and vivacious mother, Avdot'ia Petrovna Elagina (Kireevskaia by her first marriage), the leading hostess of intellectual Moscow in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Pëtr was important in the creation of Slavophilism, but not as an ideologue. Characteristically, he was never able to form his own Romantic nostalgia into an intellectual structure; he made himself felt only indirectly, by acting on his brother. He participated in the intellectual debates of the 1840s, but mechanically.⁷ He was not a debater or a salon lion, and he never felt at home in those brilliant and lustrous surroundings.

Pëtr's lifework was the collecting of Russian folk songs. He began, at first in a desultory way, in the early 1830s, and by his death in 1856 he had amassed a very large body of songs, almost none of which had he published—and many of which remain unpublished to this day. The work absorbed him increasingly, and he was assisted by a large group of friends and acquaintances: great writers, such as Pushkin and Gogol; gentry neighbors, who copied down a song or two because they knew of his interest; students at the University of Moscow, like Iakushkin. In time, Kireevsky's work became well known to all literary Russia. Interest in the collection grew, and songs came in from all sides.⁸

The history of the collection and why so little of it was published in the nineteenth century is itself a fascinating subject, which has recently been rather thoroughly explored by Soviet folklorists. No doubt, as they persuasively argue, the regime of Tsar Nicholas and its censors was largely to blame. But Kireevsky's own passivity and inability to follow through on a project were also factors, as his occasionally exasperated friends often said. In fact, the massive collection seems to have brought little satisfaction to those most closely associated with it. Pëtr Kireevsky was deeply troubled by his inability to bring it out; Iakushkin was, for a time, its putative editor, and the project brought him nothing but trouble.

Although Iakushkin's collecting activities in fact predate his acquaintance with Pëtr Kireevsky, it was Kireevsky who provided him with encouragement and support for what had been a casual and amusing activity. At some point in the early 1840s, Iakushkin learned of Kireevsky's interest and sent the older man a song he had transcribed. According to Bazanov, Kireevsky responded with fifteen rubles, an impressive sum for Pavel Ivanovich at any time. The experiment was repeated on two more occasions, and the third transaction brought with it an introduction to the great collector. All this must have taken place prior to 1843, since by that summer Iakushkin's collecting activity had already taken on a more systematic and regular form.⁹

From the time of his departure from the university in 1845 until the end of 1849, Iakushkin spent most of his time traveling and collecting. In addition to the songs—which, of course, went into the Kireevsky collection—Iakushkin collected proverbs for V. I. Dal', who did for folk sayings and proverbs what Kireevsky did for songs (except for the fact that Dal' had no psychological problems about publishing). Moreover, a certain number of fairy tales (*skazki*) collected by Iakushkin found their way eventually into the great collection by Afanas'ev, which is for Russians what Grimms' *Hausmärchen* is for Germans.¹⁰ Pavel Ivanovich was supported by Kireevsky and Dal' (and perhaps others) in these years; thus in a sense he may be called the first "professional" collector in Russia. Apparently for financial reasons, however,

Iakushkin was forced to curtail his collecting activity in the fall of 1849 and take the examinations that would qualify him as a secondary-school teacher.

In accordance with his Slavophile views, Pëtr Kireevsky had a rather special Romantic and historical attitude toward the songs in his collection. He was looking for traces of an ancient spirituality and religious culture that, he believed, had been sapped and undermined by the Westernization and "modernization" of Russia since Peter the Great. This spiritual culture, and the "organic," patriarchal social life to which it corresponded, had been all but totally destroyed in Russia's upper class, but significant traces still remained in the life of the peasantry. This belief was common to Slavophiles, and so while Ivan Kireevsky and Aleksei Stepanovich Khomiakov occupied themselves with trying to understand Russia's pre-Petrine history and culture in the manner of idealist historians and spiritual anthropologists, Pëtr Kireevsky sought Old Russian culture in old Russian songs. He had, in other words, a preconceived idea of the Russian people in his mind—peaceful, religious, patriarchal in their social forms—and the songs he collected were to vindicate this canvas, to enlarge and deepen it.

Kireevsky paid little attention to modern and regional variants. The more "ancient" the song was, the better. He cared most about songs with religious content and imagery. On the other hand, he was totally uninterested in songs about Stenka Razin and Emel'ian Pugachëv, or in the folklore of peasant revolt in general. This turned out to be Iakushkin's subject, but he got no help here from his mentor.

Iakushkin, we know, expressed a contemptuous lack of interest in Slavophilism later in his life. Whether he took it seriously when he was serving his apprenticeship with Kireevsky we have no real way of knowing. Traces of what might be termed Slavophile attitudes can be seen in certain of his journalistic writings of the 1850s. But it is hard to imagine that such an untheoretical, hard-headed, commonsensical nature as Iakushkin was could ever have really read or even taken very seriously the "little German books" that he subsequently dismissed so flippantly. And Ivan

Kireevsky and Khomiakov were zealous proselytizers in the 1840s; had Iakushkin been in any sense a convert, we should in all probability know about it.

Certainly Iakushkin's more realistic and contemporary attitude toward the song, his lack of interest in constructing an ideal text in which the spiritual message would be most radiantly clear, his fascination with regional variation, with dialect—all this differentiates him sharply from Kireevsky and his spiritual quest.

Iakushkin's other early mentor, the conservative nationalist historian Mikhail Petrovich Pogodin, had a more scholarly and less ideological attitude toward folklore, although this can be said only with reservations. Pogodin—a historian, journalist, and organizer—was a man whose description demands superlatives.¹¹ He was, to begin with, extremely long-lived, immensely energetic, remarkably varied in his interests. His erudition was on a grand, nineteenth-century scale. He was also boring, bigoted, stubborn, and intellectually limited, to a degree. His more emotional and fulsome pages on the glories of Russia's national past (in particular, on Peter the Great) are hilarious and have to be read to be believed. The seizures and ecstatic constriction of the heart that he experienced when he was shown the house where Peter the Great lived in Holland are a kind of nationalist farce.¹²

Despite Pogodin's titanic excesses, it was he who seems to have done most to guide and define Iakushkin's first serious collecting activity. He helped make what had been pleasant summertime rambles in the country a vocation and (as nearly as the word can be used of Iakushkin) a career. We have, in fact, a remarkable letter, written by Pogodin to Iakushkin in the mid-1840s, in which he formally and fully laid out what should be the young man's mode of activity on a trip to the countryside. "Your primary goal," Pogodin began in his pedantic way,

is to collect folk songs. You ought to have with you Novikov's and Sakharov's collections, to which you should attach an alphabetical catalogue for convenient reference. Having heard the songs from the lips of the people, you will note variations on the printed text, de-

scribing precisely where you heard them. You will likewise inscribe the new songs in alphabetical order as they are sung or spoken before you, without any kind of omission. In writing down the songs, you will have occasion to observe differences in pronunciation; these differences are very important as they can serve, together with other more or less important signs, to define dialects and sub-dialects, which in turn help delimit tribes and appanage principalities [the old, pre-Muscovite princely territories] and, perhaps, certain provinces as well.

Here, strikingly, is a less spiritual, more historical approach to folklore than we find with the Slavophile Kireevsky. Pogodin's emphasis was to be taken over by the younger generation of folklorists, who by and large showed a new scrupulousness with regard to the given text and a new interest in its regional variation.

"Of the songs," continued Pogodin, "you will value the historical most highly; since one encounters them most rarely among the people, they are the most valuable. But they are known—that I know for sure. . . .

Ritual songs occupy second place after the historical—for instance the Christmas songs, which display clear signs of antiquity. Šafařík has assured me that he has seen traces of great antiquity in many of our songs. He deeply regrets that our dear Peter Vasil'evich Kireevskii is delaying the publication of his valuable collection.

Finally, direct your attention to the spiritual songs, of which we have a multitude—and they are capital. Every blind man at the fair or outside the monastery will sing you a whole notebook.

For the songs, as equally for your other goals, you must strive to stay as far as possible from towns and great roads, the paths of civilization, so-called, with its depravities. You are nowhere to say that you have come with such-and-such a goal—the collecting of songs or any other. Little by little, inadvertently as it were, between things you must do it, neither appearing a clever fellow nor being confused by any kind of stupidity or banality. It seems to me that it would be best if you grew yourself a beard, put on a red calico shirt with a twisted collar, belted your caftan with a sash—yes, and supply yourself with various wares: earrings, rings, beads, lace, ribbons, biscuits, cakes, and be a trader through the villages. Then you will have the best chance of striking up an acquaintance with the village singers. This is the way

of wisdom in collecting songs. By the way, experience will teach you best of all.

And in conclusion, Pogodin enumerated other things that Iakushkin was to note, describe, and explore in the countryside:

the sites of ancient towns, burial mounds and their contents. Where are they? Traces of ancient settlements, churches and monasteries. Tradition. Old churches and houses in general, if they are remarkable for originality. Iconostases. Images. Church plate. Collect information about documents, the manuscripts of books printed in the old orthography in particular. Write down either the location or where you heard of old coins, icons, wooden crosses, figures in bronze or stone—old things in general,

Pogodin wound up in a burst of enthusiasm. "Learn the names of connoisseurs and collectors and about their collections. The names of traders, and inform us rapidly by mail."¹³

Iakushkin did in fact grow a beard and dress himself—roughly—as Pogodin advised. Still, Pogodin cannot be held responsible for Iakushkin's permanently abandoning every other costume but the red calico shirt, the sash, and the greasy boots. Pavel Ivanovich followed Pogodin's further instructions and frequently disguised himself as a petty trader, dispensing rouge, whiting, lace, and ribbons to peasant women and writing down songs "between things." Very seldom did Iakushkin tell either lord or peasant that he had come to the countryside merely to record peasant songs; when he did, for one reason or another, admit his purpose, the result was often skepticism, incredulity, or suspicion of some more sinister purpose. Particularly as the coming Emancipation came to dominate the life of rural Russia and the temperature of the body social began to rise, a gentleman journalist collecting folk songs in peasant costume looked more like a dangerous political agitator and was treated accordingly. Particularly when, as was almost inevitably the case with Iakushkin, his papers were not in order.

Although Pavel Ivanovich wrote a number of what he termed tales and "articles," his most characteristic mode of expression

was what he called *Putevye pis'ma* ("travel letters"). Although some of the songs he collected first appeared in this diarist and anecdotal form, most of them either went into the main body of the Kireevsky collection, were published in some other form, or were lost. Apart from the songs, Iakushkin's travel notes dealt extensively with the kind of archaeological and antiquarian discovery that Pogodin had recommended. Burial mounds, old buildings, icons, manuscript collections—these he faithfully (and enthusiastically) tracked down and reported. Intermingled with these reports, however, were the conversations with peasant Russia that are the chief value of the *Putevye pis'ma* and make them such engrossing reading even today. No one in Iakushkin's time, perhaps no reporter in nineteenth-century Russia, took the trouble to listen to the real voice of the people, as he did, or tried to live its real life. On the road, in the poorest taverns and pot-houses, in the dank and filthy monastery dormitories where pilgrims slept, in third-class railway cars, in peasant huts, and in the fields, we find him asking the poorest and most numerous class of Russia to tell its stories and give its opinion on the issues that concerned it most.

His fundamental mission (which, characteristically, he appears never to have formulated soberly and straightforwardly) was to find out what the life of peasant Russia was like and to inform *obshchestvo*. He was interested in what the people wore, what they ate, what words they used, and what they suffered. He was fundamentally a realist, in other words, and to be a realist about peasant Russia in the 1850s and the 1860s was to write "*j'accuse*." Perhaps to describe things as they are is always to indict; only under very special circumstances does realism not appear to be "Left." Thus it does not matter that Iakushkin had no real "ideology"; according to Leskov, Iakushkin's social ideal seemed to be a "universal artel, a great vague ideal, which, insofar as I can judge, he never understood himself." This kind of vague communal idealism could be found either on the utopian Right, among the Slavophiles, or on the utopian Left, in the *narodnik* ideology that developed in the 1860s. But Iakushkin's simplicity, his attachment to the concrete, and above all his

realism, forbade him either of these spiritual resting places.

Not, one must add, that the powerful political currents of the day had no effect on Pavel Ivanovich. Between the time he first began to scour the countryside for Pogodin and Kireevsky in the mid-1840s and his death in 1871, Iakushkin the man and the journalist underwent a series of subtle changes and permutations; it was as if he were caught in the undertow of the times. The great drama of Emancipation whetted his sense of the exploitation of the peasants and his hostility not only to the Russian bureaucracy but to the gentry—both liberal and conservative—as well. One might have supposed, for instance, that Iakushkin would have found Ivan Turgenev a fairly sympathetic figure—at any rate in the period before he became embroiled in the literary-political controversy that followed the publication of *Fathers and Children* in 1862. It is quite possible that the stories of peasant life that Turgenev published collectively under the title of *A Sportsman's Sketches* had some influence on Iakushkin's own reporting on rural Russia. And yet in his masterpiece, "Great Is the God of the Russian Land,"¹⁴ Iakushkin bitterly assailed Turgenev and "liberals" of his stripe. They were people who believed in "the rule of law," but they had made the law in their own interest, so that it became simply formalized extortion and exploitation. The peasant knew nothing of written law; the very idea of law "in a book" was incomprehensible to him. So he remained true to his own customs and laws of life, dealing with "their law" any way he could. Here Iakushkin displayed an attitude common to both Slavophiles and Populists: the state and its laws was a force alien and exterior to the Russian people; the state had no respect for the traditional customs and values of Russian society. But in this context, the thrust of Iakushkin's criticism of the liberal Westernizer Turgenev was distinctly "Left."

As the 1860s wore on, the archaeological and antiquarian content of Iakushkin's "travel letters" was replaced by realistic observation of contemporary peasant life: descriptions of the functioning of a fishing artel (with special emphasis on the intricate cooperative arrangements of the membership); casual but devastating descriptions of peasant poverty; anecdotes revealing the

effect of the new railroads on the lives of peasants and petty traders. Not that Iakushkin ever lost his interest in burial mounds, manuscript collections, and old churches—but there were fewer of them as time passed. He could always be interested by how the local wisewoman cured snakebite. But there was less about wonder-working icons of the Mother of God and more about peasant bandits, not to mention Stenka Razin and Pugachëv. Old attitudes—the love of ancient Russian cities and a pronounced dislike of “German” St. Petersburg—now seemed subtly different. Peter the Great was less the destroyer of a time-honored, indigenous Russian culture than a man who drove and oppressed his people without mercy or limit. The 1860s audience for Iakushkin’s realism and peasant orientation tended to be a “Left” audience—and what writer is unmoved by the point of view of his readers, admirers, and publishers?

In 1849, however, all this lay in the future. Then he was still a virtually unknown agent of other men; at the age of twenty-seven, he had published only a brief note on the folklore of bandits and sorcerers in Pogodin’s journal, the *Muscovite* (*Moskvitianin*). Having passed his teacher’s examinations in the fall of 1849, Iakushkin spent the next six years as an instructor in various schools in Kharkov province, in the Ukraine. Our information on this period is even scantier than for his university years, but one thing, at least, is clear. Iakushkin’s style and way of teaching did not please either the director of schools in Kharkov province or many other local educators. One might regard it as a foregone conclusion that he would be insufficiently authoritarian, that he would rather tell his students about his adventures in rural Russia than teach grammar, that he would take them on similar expeditions, that he would teach his classes in an “ordinary uniform,” rather than in the customary “dress uniform.” Indeed, one feels that the local school authorities were lucky to have gotten their young teacher into even an ordinary uniform; when one struggles to imagine the classroom scene, one sees him there (if at all) in the peasant costume in which he had lived as a collector and was subsequently to make famous: the

red calico shirt, the long-waisted *poddëvka* coat, and the greasy boots.

One man who saw something of Pavel Ivanovich in the early 1850s was Pëtr Veinberg, subsequently a poet, translator, and editor of the *Century*,* then a student at the University of Kharkov. Veinberg confirms our impression that Pavel Ivanovich had no understanding of what was regarded as necessary classroom discipline, and had a "casual" attitude toward his superiors. The whole teaching business, in fact, "made him sick," Iakushkin confided to Veinberg. This was while he occupied the first of a series of similar posts that he was to hold briefly until he gave up teaching and "retired" in 1856.

Veinberg, a good-humored and conventional man of letters, has also left us a description of Pavel Ivanovich's room in Kharkov; it seems to be typical of Pavel Ivanovich's physical surroundings during the infrequent periods in which he was settled somewhere. "On the bed," reports the squeamish Veinberg,

on top of a filthy and rather ragged blanket (and the bed was completely unmade) stood a broken candle stick containing a tallow candle, and next to it some kind of crockery—a sort of plate—with something like sausage on it. On the table was a heap of all kinds of papers and books in unimaginable disorder, on the top of which lay the notorious "ordinary uniform," rolled up in a ball. In the middle of the floor was an indescribable vessel of slops and under the table was the vodka, while dirt and filth were all over the floor and everywhere in a way in which it is hard to imagine.¹⁵

Pavel Ivanovich's living arrangements taxed Veinberg's powers of description to the limit: everything seems to have been "unimaginable" or, at the very least, "indescribable." Pavel Ivanovich got angry at his visitor's obvious distaste and called him a "little gentleman."

The two met again a decade or so later in St. Petersburg, after Iakushkin had become a figure of some renown. Veinberg arranged for Iakushkin to take part in a "literary evening"; he was

*Just before it was sold to the writers' cooperative that included Iakushkin, Shchapov, Eliseev, and Leskov.

supposed to bring the occasion to a dramatic close by reading one of his stories. Iakushkin was very drunk by the close of the evening, but he managed to get himself to the lectern, where he intoned the first line of the story: "It happened in a tavern." He was unable to go any further, however, and after repeating the opening line twice more, he uttered one of his "energetic Russian words," threw up his hands, and "somehow left the stage." The audience, Veinberg reported, took it good-humoredly. Literary evenings are often too long, and for some of the audience, at any rate, their guest must have performed about as expected.

While Iakushkin was bouncing from school to school in the Ukraine, the Crimean War broke out, and perhaps out of desperation with his teaching career, perhaps out of some compound of curiosity and patriotism, he attempted to enlist in the militia. He was refused (perhaps his appearance failed to inspire confidence) but proceeded to spend a great deal of time at the military hospital in Kharkov, to which Russian wounded were brought back from the south. He later wrote up his conversations with the soldiers as a series of anecdotes entitled "From Tales of the Crimean War."

In the spring of 1856, Iakushkin returned to Saburovo, apparently already determined to resume his collecting activities full-time. But financial problems intervened. Because of his illegitimate birth, he had no legal claim on the family estate, and Praskov'ia Faleevna apparently already regarded him as a "good-for-nothing"; she had no intention of squandering Saburovo's small resources to send her son junketing and carousing around the countryside. The fact that she was herself a peasant probably made the notion of collecting peasant songs appear all the more frivolous and absurd.

His mother having indicated her disapproval, Iakushkin turned again to Pogodin and Kireevsky, hoping that they could arrange for the Russian Geographical Society to sponsor a trip to the Don region, if they could not finance it themselves. But this idea, too, came to nothing. So for the next two years Pavel Ivanovich remained at Saburovo, spending much of his time with the interesting and congenial types in which the Orël area

abounded. Pëtr Kireevsky, his patron, died before the year was out, and Leskov does not seem at this time to have been part of his circle of friends. But there were the interesting Ukrainian writer Marko Vovchok and her husband, A. V. Markovich, and other writers—Pisemsky and Ostrovsky—were also periodically on the scene. Iakushkin's closest friends, however, were not these famous men of letters. His most inveterate cronies were I. V. Pavlov, a university acquaintance of Herzen who subsequently became editor of the liberal *Moscow Messenger* (*Moskovskii vestnik*); N. K. Ruttsen, an old schoolfellow whose sartorial disorder seems to have rivaled Iakushkin's; and—in particular—a neighboring landowner, Mikhail Aleksandrovich Stakhovich.

These three men were drawn to each other and to Pavel Ivanovich by the usual mild alienation afflicting rather eccentric men of letters in the provinces, but especially by their interest in the *narod*. All of them had "projects" of one kind or another. Pavlov, who seems still to have professed the "Westernizing" radicalism of his university years, wrote a number of articles on social subjects (bribery among provincial officials was one) that were without exception turned down by the journals to which they were sent. Stakhovich wrote pleasant verses, full of rather decorative, laid-on folk motives and phrases; at one time he set out to do an annotated edition of the *Ancient Russian Poems* of Kirsha Daniilov, the first collection of *byliny*, or heroic songs, compiled in modern times. But the group met frequently to talk about folklore, local affairs, and politics, and to make music; Stakhovich was an excellent guitarist, and Iakushkin loved to sing, although a contemporary reports that his voice was "shrill and squeaky" and not suitable for the drawing room.

No doubt, as the Emancipation began to loom on the horizon, the friends spent much time talking about what shape it might assume and what they might do at the local level. Stakhovich, although not a radical like Pavlov, was benevolently and paternally disposed toward the peasants; he was also rich and more influential than his friends and served as the marshal of the nobility in the district. Unfortunately, Stakhovich was murdered by one of his former clerks and an estate manager in 1858; the

motive, apparently, was robbery. The province was deprived of a respected and influential proponent of Emancipation, and Iakushkin lost the best friend he ever had.

While Pavlov was writing his articles and Stakhovich was variously distinguishing himself, Iakushkin was working hard on the Kireevsky collection.¹⁶ Pëtr Kireevsky had died on October 25, 1856, a few months after his brother. He left the collection to Ivan's children, whose guardian was the dead brothers' half-brother, Vasily Elagin. The latter had no interest in the collection, and he at first honored the dead man's expressed wish and turned the whole business over to Iakushkin, who seemed to meet all the qualifications necessary for continuing Kireevsky's great work and—perhaps even more important—seeing it into print.

Preparing the collection was a big job; the disorder was greater than the new editor had believed. A great many texts were not to be found; others were in the hands of various friends and sympathizers. Iakushkin and Elagin were eventually forced to publish declarations in various journals that the collection now belonged to Elagin and was being prepared by Iakushkin.

Another problem was presented by the Kireevsky methodology—the attempt to create the “ideal text” out of a number of variants, usually on the basis of antiquity, or simply according to what seemed “best” to Kireevsky. Iakushkin, of course, believed that the editor should simply indicate as fully as possible each variant to the best text, with notes elucidating regional and other variations. These methodological differences seemed so interesting and important that the Slavophile journal *Russian Colloquy* printed samples of the work of both men so that the readers of the future edition should be clear about their differing approaches. In the matter of the separation of genres, however—historical, ritual, lyric, and so on—Iakushkin's plan corresponded roughly to that projected by Kireevsky.

Iakushkin worked extremely hard at his project, assisted from time to time by Stakhovich. The work was mostly done at Vasily Elagin's estate, Bunino, and Elagin provided financial support for Iakushkin while he worked. By midsummer of 1857, the work on

the historical songs was virtually complete, and Pavel Ivanovich took the projected volume to Moscow, where a number of folklorists, men of letters, and prominent Slavophiles (Khomiakov and Konstantin Aksakov among them) approved it enthusiastically. It was then up to Elagin to see it through the censorship; by the autumn of 1857, Iakushkin felt he had only two weeks or so of small corrections and polishing to do before the historical songs could go to press.

Then the blow fell. In February 1858, Elagin took the project away from him, and two years later it was entrusted to the Society of the Lovers of Russian Literature at the University of Moscow. An influential literary society, founded in 1811, in the late 1850s it was headed by A. S. Khomiakov and its orientation was strongly Slavophile. Eventually, some songs were published by another folklorist, P. A. Bessonov, upon whom Iakushkin's mantle had fallen. Bessonov's edition was intelligently and most bitterly criticized by Iakushkin.

Various explanations for Iakushkin's exclusion from the project have been advanced: from the idea of a simple misunderstanding of some kind to a wholly ideological theory, based on the opposition of the "reactionary" Slavophiles, who had legal rights to the collection, to the radical democrat, Iakushkin. Although the matter is still far from clear, Iakushkin's most recent Soviet biographer, Balandin, has cleared away a great deal of underbrush. Crucial in the matter seems to have been the dislike and distrust of Iakushkin felt by Pëtr Kireevsky's mother, the seventy-year-old grande dame Avdot'ia Petrovna Elagina, who was still unmistakably head of the Kireevsky-Elagin family. The occasion for her outburst of anger at Iakushkin, early in 1858, was that he planned to publish some material not actually in the Kireevsky collection (and, in return, certain songs from the collection would be given to the Russian Geographical Society). She responded angrily that nothing that was not actually her "Petrusha's work" should appear, and lamented the connection of the "madman" Iakushkin with the project. Considering how many hands had been associated with Pëtr's work, her objection was naively ill-founded. From the unusual invective that she adopted ("madman," "four-

eyes”), however, it seems probable that the question of including outside material was little more than a pretext for getting rid of a man whom she found repugnant and incomprehensible (and disrespectful, very likely, as well). Indeed, this imperious, religious, and highly cultivated woman, educated at the turn of the century and a literary aristocrat to her fingertips, must have found Iakushkin vexing to the last degree, with his “energetic Russian words,” filthy peasant costume, and complete lack of drawing-room manners. Furthermore, the ease and rapidity with which she had her way suggests that some dissatisfaction with Pavel Ivanovich or his methods already existed. It may have been personal, or it may have been that even his atypically delicate and respectful criticisms of Kireevsky’s methodology had given offense. Certainly the Slavophiles still tended to think in terms of people being “ours” or “not ours,” and Pavel Ivanovich fell into the latter group. Within the month, a consortium of elderly intellectuals—the majority of them Slavophiles—had been set up to be responsible for the work, and Bessonov had been named editor.

Pavel Ivanovich, for all of his even temper and casualness, could not but take this unexpected turn of events with bitterness. It was, in fact, the great setback of his life up to that point, and he never entirely recovered from it. It probably gave the *coup de grâce* to any prospect that he might “settle down” and become no more than the kind of mild eccentric that most men of his class were prepared to tolerate.

Between the spring of 1858 and April 1865, when the police sent him back to Saburovo, Iakushkin based himself in St. Petersburg but spent the greater part of his time on the road, collecting songs and information about popular life, drinking and talking with whoever crossed his path, and getting into scrapes with the provincial police. He was supported by various journals at various times: the Slavophile *Russian Colloquy* (under its most “liberal” and political editor, Ivan Aksakov) and the liberal-radical *Annals of the Fatherland* and *Contemporary*. In addition to producing for these journals his “travel letters,” he also wrote what have been called “tales” and “articles”—the most famous of which is

undoubtedly "Great Is the God of the Russian Land," a brilliant collection of satirical anecdotes illuminating the progress of peasant emancipation in rural Russia.

No distinctions of genre can really be made with respect to Pavel Ivanovich's work, however. He had one method, which never varied: he went out and talked to people, and then came back to a more tranquil situation (in this period, St. Petersburg) and wrote down what had happened to him, with whom he had talked, and what had been said. So his work is really—except for his song collecting—one long series of conversations with "the other Russia."

When Iakushkin had a commission of some sort (as he did, for instance, to go to Novgorod and Pskov provinces for the *Russian Colloquy* in 1858–59), he would at some point have to sit down and write up his experiences from the extremely bare notes he had taken in the field—without much joy, for he much preferred being on the road to writing about it afterward. If he did not actually have a prior commission, it was generally financial pressure that caused him to nest in someone's apartment and produce an "article."

Iakushkin's writing habits were the subject of much amusement and occasional consternation among those who knew him. While on the road, he jotted things down on menus, cigarette paper (he was a heavy smoker), and even smaller scraps of paper. When he got these "notes" out, often months later, they were torn and dirty beyond description, and it seemed incredible to his host of the moment that anything at all could be produced from them. On many occasions he had lost a crucial scrap or two, and a good deal had to be done from memory.

Nor was he particularly concerned about the looks of the final draft; it, too, was often written on what was nearest at hand. One of his closer friends was the radical Matvei Sviridenko (Rybnikov's friend), who worked in Kozhanchikov's bookstore in St. Petersburg, one of Pavel Ivanovich's regular haunts. In the store, Sviridenko kept a notebook in which he wrote down donations that customers made to Sunday schools for illiterate workers. On one occasion he was both amused and annoyed to find that Pavel

Ivanovich had taken over this notebook for one of his articles: the logbook was there, it was clean paper in quantity, and it never occurred to Iakushkin that there might be any objection.

"Great Is the God of the Russian Land" was written in Kozhanchikov's bookstore, but it turned out to be shorter than Iakushkin had intended, since he lost all his notes while he was still writing. The piece was delivered to Nekrasov, then editor of *Annals of the Fatherland*, unfinished and untitled. (It was always extremely difficult to tell whether a piece by Iakushkin was finished or not, since the content was simply a string of anecdotes; there was no real beginning or end.) Nekrasov had apparently not regarded Iakushkin as much more than an amusing character until he saw the piece, but he recognized its quality immediately, gave it a name, published it, and paid the author fifty rubles.

Many people whose early lives are spent in straitened circumstances develop an exaggerated respect for cash. Exactly the opposite was true of Iakushkin. Except for the last few years of his life in exile, when his health was deteriorating rapidly, he lived as if money did not matter, and he did so with a success probably unique in his time. When he was in pocket, he spent all he had generously, if not prodigally, on his friends in town or on the peasants he met on his travels. The money was equally likely to be spent, apparently, on food and drink or in exchange for songs.

Pavel Ivanovich spent very little when he was in town, except on food and vodka, since he was always living with a friend and he had literally no possessions except the clothes on his back. Nekrasov tried to train Pavel Ivanovich to live in an apartment of his own, but was not successful. Iakushkin was incurably gregarious and—strikingly—afraid of being alone.

The satirical poet D. D. Minaev met Iakushkin on a St. Petersburg street corner on one occasion when he was trying to write a story and looking for a "corner" to stay in. Minaev invited him to move in for a few days and asked him where his "things" were. Iakushkin just grinned. "When my laundry is so far gone that it simply drops off my sinful body, I buy myself a change and throw the old stuff into the stove," he told his new host. That same

evening, he moved in, wearing a new red calico shirt in honor of the occasion.

When Minaev and Iakushkin arose the next morning, Minaev asked his guest whether he took coffee or tea in the morning.

"I don't use either of those liquids," replied Pavel Ivanovich, "but here's a glass of vodka and a piece of bread—that's something else again." And the offer was repeated every morning, not for a "few days" but for three weeks.

On this occasion, as on others, Iakushkin had a hard time making himself write; it was much pleasanter to go out and drink all day and far into the night. Since his frequently euphoric return at 4:00 A.M. disturbed the servants (Minaev said), his host asked him either to be more quiet or to get back earlier.

Pavel Ivanovich did not come back at all for the next couple of nights, so Minaev concluded that he was sleeping elsewhere. As he was just sitting down at his desk one morning, the maid came in giggling. She said that the porter had just come from Iakushkin with a request for cigarettes.

"And where *is* Pavel Ivanovich?" Minaev asked in amazement.

"In the lodge," the maid replied. "He spent the night with the porter so that he wouldn't disturb you. In the morning he sent out for vodka and wrote down some songs that the porter sang him. *A very odd gentleman!*"¹⁷

Almost no one seems to have resented what might have been regarded as outrageous sponging in someone else. This was in part because Pavel Ivanovich was extremely conscientious about repaying any actual debts. When he was paid for an article, he would go around liquidating his obligations until the money was gone, at which point he would start all over again. If anything was left over after his debts had been paid, he would often distribute it among the taverns and cookhouses where he ate and drank; he could then indulge himself without the worry of carrying cash with him, which he very often lost or gave away. At one St. Petersburg restaurant, Iakushkin was such an impressive customer that the largest kind of wineglass was named after him. One can imagine customers telling the waiter

that they were thirsty enough that night for a "Iakushkin."

But people's hospitality to Pavel Ivanovich was more, and more generous, than can be explained by his readiness to pay back loans. In the country, of course, he could rely on the notable hospitality of the Orthodox peasantry, who generally regarded a meal and a bed for the wayfaring stranger as a religious obligation—even when the stranger was as odd as Iakushkin. When he encountered Finns or Germans who had no such gracious attitude, he would report the matter indignantly and scathingly, often sounding like the Russian chauvinist that, at bottom, he was.

Nearly all the city dwellers who reported their relations with Iakushkin mentioned his extraordinary tact and delicacy as a guest—a *sui generis* kind of tact, it is hardly necessary to add. On one occasion, a Kharkov University professor arrived at his house in the evening and was told that a gentleman had arrived a few minutes before and had promptly gone to sleep on the bedroom floor. Iakushkin often slept on the floor, and although he would tell people that he did it to stay in shape, it seems clear that he was using this device to tell his host, among other things, that he meant to be no trouble. If anyone was offended by Iakushkin, it was likely to be the servants employed by his more well-to-do acquaintances. Leskov's German maid, Ida, had hysterics repeatedly while Iakushkin was staying in the apartment. At first he slept on the couch or on a rug in the corner, but since Ida wasn't pleased with that, Pavel Ivanovich moved into Leskov's own bed—which the master did not much care for, but he could do nothing without wounding his guest.

It was not just Iakushkin's tact and unquenchable good nature that caused his friends to put up with him so readily, or his ability to efface himself, or the store of anecdotes that one of his visits invariably provided. He had a kind of innocence and simplicity that charmed and impressed not only sophisticated writers but the much less sentimental petite bourgeoisie of St. Petersburg. "Even the well fed and spoiled doorman of a luxurious and elegant house on the Nevskii Prospekt . . . thought it not beneath his dignity to brush off his threadbare coat, saying 'there's a feather on it, Pavel Ivanovich.'"¹⁸ Unquestionably, many of Ia-

Iakushkin's friends and acquaintances displayed for him a special tenderness, regarding him—consciously or unconsciously—as a kind of “Fool in Christ.” For such a personage, clearly, ordinary social standards were quite out of place, and one might be assumed to have a kind of religious obligation toward him. The tradition of the Holy Fool was far more powerfully alive in Russia than elsewhere in nineteenth-century Europe.

Of course, not everybody who chanced to come in contact with Iakushkin loved and protected him. Leskov adds to his reminiscences that of course many people were offended by him, or felt their self-esteem threatened. They would mutter, “It wouldn't be a bad idea to clean him up”; there were those who felt that his exile (for what offense they did not know) was “a good idea.”¹⁹

One evening in the winter of 1863, Iakushkin went to the opera at the Mariinsky Theater; the company was doing *A Life for the Tsar*, and Pavel Ivanovich was dressed as usual. At the end of the first act, an army general approached him, clearly outraged by his clothes and the negligent manner in which he was leaning against the wall of the stalls, looking out at the audience.

The general swelled with anger. “It is inconvenient of you, Mr. Iakushkin, to stand like that. Everyone is looking at you.”

“Let them look,” replied Pavel Ivanovich calmly, “on the contrary, I find it very convenient.”

“This is no place for you,” replied the general heatedly. “Your costume is attracting general attention, and it won't do.”

“Let them gape. I am not asking anyone to look at me. This is a Russian opera, and I—may I inform you—am also Russian. Therefore I have come here.”

“Yes, yes. Only take yourself upstairs, if you please.”

“I can see better from here. I paid three rubles, and I don't plan to sacrifice them to no purpose.”

At this point, a friend of Iakushkin drew him tactfully away and the scene came to an end.²⁰

The peasant attitude toward Iakushkin is a good deal harder to gauge. His writings provide irrefutable evidence that many of the peasants with whom he came in contact were willing to speak frankly to him, as they could not to an ordinary member of his

class. Despite his peasant costume and his considerable mastery of peasant speech, however, the peasants rarely—if ever—took him for one of their own. The most obvious indication of his nonpeasant status was his glasses, which peasants never wore. Iakushkin complained to Leskov about the peasants' attitude on at least one occasion; they regarded him, he said, as some kind of mummer or actor. "What do you mean, an actor?" Iakushkin would argue good-naturedly. "All the same, an actor," the peasant would reply, cordially but stubbornly. At any rate, Iakushkin could console himself that he was not taken for a Persian, as Konstantin Aksakov allegedly was when he walked through a village in his notion of peasant garb. The embroidered shirts and lacquered boots of the Slavophiles smelled of the museum, and the greater "realism" of Iakushkin's literary views was echoed in his costume.

The novelist P. D. Boborykin has left us with the most hostile portrait of Iakushkin except for the one emanating from the police archives.²¹ Much of his animosity may be regarded as the result of personal friction: Boborykin was a busy, efficient, and somewhat self-important man, and Pavel Ivanovich was not a reliable colleague. When Boborykin was editing the journal *Library for Reading*, Iakushkin promised him strings of articles, but came to him only "for strengthening," as he put it. But Boborykin's observations on Iakushkin and the peasantry have a ring of plausibility about them that obliges us to consider them seriously. Boborykin contends that the peasants knew Iakushkin was a *gospodin* (master) and they could see that he was just "loafing around" and "chattering." They often made fun of him, and what Boborykin refers to vaguely as "misunderstandings" were frequent. Everything about him, says Boborykin, smacked of the "type of Moscow literary Bohemian," the upper-class student or writer. The segment of "the people" with whom Iakushkin really got along, Boborykin maliciously concludes, were not real peasants but tavernkeepers and the motley people who hung out in the *kabak*. (This last observation we may dismiss: Boborykin never traveled with Pavel Ivanovich in the countryside; Iakushkin's social life in St. Peters-

burg was quite different from his way of life on the road.)

To these observations of Boborykin, we may add that of the well-known writer A. F. Pisemsky, who knew rural Russia pretty well himself.²² Stressing how alien Iakushkin's wandering, garrulous way of life was to that of the beleaguered Russian peasant, Pisemsky caustically observed that if Iakushkin had been born in the village, he would have been a *zabuldyzhka*—that is, a stock figure of fun, to whom no responsibility of any kind could be entrusted. The function of the *zabuldyzhka* was to amuse people at the tavern, or at a wedding, where he was always given the first cup so he could start "fooling" as soon as possible. This characteristically brutal judgment is also beside the point: Iakushkin was not a peasant and never claimed to be one.

But after all is said and done, both these hostile critics are pointing out an important fact that transcends the biography of Pavel Ivanovich Iakushkin: Russian society in the 1860s was rigorously stratified, and there was no real place in either *obshchestvo* or the *narod* for a man like Iakushkin. He was neither lord nor peasant; he was neither a genuine Holy Fool nor a revolutionary. He tried, with only partial and temporary success, to create an identity of another kind for himself, and his society could not accept it—no segment of it, really. A peasant in a St. Petersburg pothouse once told one of Pavel Ivanovich's journalist friends that he was a "fine, good" *barin* (lord, gentleman), but "wrong in the head," not all there. Another peasant told the same journalist a totally false but revealing anecdote. Iakushkin's father, said the peasant, had disowned him because he had spent twenty thousand rubles on drink, and had "given" him to the peasants. So, said the peasant, Pavel Ivanovich was gradually turning into a muzhik; only his glasses remained to show that he was a "real gentleman." The kernel of truth in this yarn, remarked the journalist, was that Iakushkin really had squandered his modest resources on peasants, paying them generously for the songs they sang him and wining and dining them without stint.²³ The lack of comprehension of "the people" for Iakushkin's life could hardly be better summed up. They really understood him no better than the bureaucracy did—but it was the bureaucracy and

the police who had the power; they were the ones who eventually finished him off.

Iakushkin was a prophetic figure. He may be said to be the first Russian from the gentry class actually to "go to the people," and his reception in that quarter foreshadows the pathos surrounding the more political pilgrims who followed him. The anomalies of his family situation, too, remind one inescapably of another mutilated aristocratic rebel, Alexander Herzen. Denied by the circumstances of his birth a "normal" position in his society, Iakushkin was never able to find a place for himself; he was perhaps less a "repentant nobleman" than a bellwether of the Russian intelligentsia in the decades to come.²⁴

On August 22, 1859, Iakushkin was arrested in Pskov, where he was on assignment for Aksakov's *Russian Colloquy*. He had arrived earlier in the day, planning to stay for a time with friends, rest up, and put his notes in order. After an early supper, he stepped down to the police station to register. The official on duty seems, as Iakushkin casually put it, to have been "struck by my clothes." He asked Pavel Ivanovich if he were really "Provincial Secretary Iakushkin" (provincial secretary was the rather low rank in the bureaucracy that he had achieved through his teaching career). Iakushkin said that he was. The man then took his papers into the office. In a few minutes he came out again, accompanied by a constable. There was more conversation about the peasant costume. Iakushkin explained that he was wearing it because of his collecting activity, and produced a letter from Aksakov, explaining his relationship to the *Russian Colloquy*. Other officials, of uncertain rank and status, arrived. "Your papers are forged," said the policeman abruptly. "The signatures are forged. The papers are forged," repeated the first official.

This charge was, in fact, false. But Iakushkin's papers were certainly not in order. Instead of his passport, he had only a copy of a letter stating that it had been lost. With aristocratic hauteur, Iakushkin said that if his papers were forged, they must arrest him. His request was immediately granted. He then asked to speak to the chief of police, but was turned down, since the chief

had issued strict orders that he was not to be disturbed after hours.

Iakushkin spent the first part of the evening in a relatively comfortable room reserved for prisoners of the gentry class, smoking and reading the Pskov newspaper. He was guarded by an apparently lethargic soldier who spoke with a heavy Ukrainian accent. In the middle of the evening he tried to open the window, since the room was stuffy and he had been smoking heavily. "Where do you think you're going, you son of a bitch?" roared the soldier, who had been dozing. "You want to jump out the window! I'll . . ." The duty officer raced into the room, and Iakushkin was put in the so-called *arestantskaia*, a kind of prison dormitory reserved for the lower orders, "in which," the soldier had gravely informed him previously, "*it is impossible to be.*" The accuracy of the soldier's words was soon obvious. The *arestantskaia* was a dank and stinking cellar whose filth appalled even the less-than-fastidious Pavel Ivanovich. He spent the rest of the night talking to a peasant boy who had run away from his owner and telling him fairy tales.

At nine o'clock the following morning the police chief, Gempel', arrived and, radiating good-heartedness, told him he was free to go. But Iakushkin, now justifiably on his high horse, stated that he wished to complain formally to the governor's office about his treatment. So he sat for another twenty-four hours in the gentry cell where he had initially been confined. The governor, it appeared, was out of town, and it became clear that there was no prospect of speaking to anyone who would take action on his behalf. So when Gempel' again told him he was free to go, he left.

Iakushkin then spent several days in the nearby town of Ostrov, returning to Pskov only to leave it by train. He had bought his ticket and was sitting in the car (feeling, he said, that all was somehow not well), when he heard a voice in the door of the car explode, "Who's wearing glasses here?" He was dragged out of the train by two of his old acquaintances from the police station; as he departed, he heard someone say sympathetically, "They've got a student."

Iakushkin appears to have been completely mystified by the

reason for his rearrest; he had the confused impression, as he was being taken off the train and returned to the police station, that it was for "changing his clothes." Given the events of the past several days, it no longer seemed absolutely absurd that this might be so. He was further detained for six days and then released. Chief Gempel' subsequently explained that after Iakushkin had been released the first time, he had received a description of a murder suspect that tallied with Iakushkin's physiognomy and clothing. The question of the change of clothes had arisen since the chief had received a subsequent report that Iakushkin had abandoned his *poddëvka* coat (which the alleged murder suspect had also been wearing—the long-waisted peasant coat was a very common article) in "a certain tavern," and had emerged in a "gray tunic." This clever maneuver fanned the chief's suspicions and led to Iakushkin's rearrest. He was released after the director of the Pskov gymnasium confirmed Iakushkin's identity and mission in Pskov province. Gempel' said that Pavel Ivanovich was held for only three days; it was actually for six.

In the Russia of that time, what happened to Iakushkin was by no means an unheard-of event; quite the reverse. But it created a considerable stir and further added to his growing fame. There is no question that the government's anxiety about "agitators" in the countryside in those nervous, pre-Emancipation times lay behind the chief's actions—although at the best of times the behavior of provincial officials was often arbitrary. Since 1857, the Ministry of the Interior had been sending out anxious circulars to local police authorities about the danger of ill-intentioned people "stirring up" the peasants. And Iakushkin's inadequate papers and peasant costume must have seemed all but conclusive to Gempel' and his zealous staff.

But the times were complicated ones. Alexander II and various elements in the bureaucracy were still pushing the Emancipation against a kind of passive opposition from the majority of the gentry and bureaucracy. The government, in other words, was far from monolithic in 1859, and Iakushkin was allowed to present his side of the affair in the columns of the *Russian Colloquy*.

His long letter was a masterpiece of its kind, fully bringing out

the arbitrary behavior to which he had been subjected, his own bewildered innocence, and neglecting no small detail that might bring him sympathy: the stench of the cellar where he had spent his first night, the pitiable plight of the peasant boy, the profanity of the police, and the way they had called him by the familiar form *ty*, rather than the more respectful *Vy*. Iakushkin's account, in other words, had the wit, controlled indignation, and mastery of detail that the best liberal outrage always has. No exaggerated self-pity or bathos; something that could make the broadest possible segment of public opinion say, "Why, this could have happened to me!" Gempel', on the other hand, produced a formal, badly written, and evasive reply, full of obvious small distortions and quibbles. He was clearly not a man who was accustomed to justifying himself or his actions in print.

The liberal press seized on the incident joyfully. At the urging of Ivan Aksakov, Iakushkin's letter was widely reprinted. The *Russian Messenger* (*Russkii vestnik*) led the chorus of those who hailed the exposure of the "Pskov Affair" as the kind of healthy publicity that ought to attend the operations of the police and bureaucracy, which had in the past been able to do their work in secrecy and under cover of darkness. In many of these accounts, as in that of the *Russian Colloquy* itself, there was a good deal of praise and encouragement of the government for having the courage and good sense to criticize itself. Only among thoroughgoing radicals like Dobroliubov was there real skepticism about the value of "publicity" (*glasnost*) in effecting the major changes in Russian society that needed to be made. Iakushkin himself, despite his extremely successful venture into liberal publicism, did not share this slightly self-congratulatory liberal euphoria. Less than two years later, we find him writing (in a batch of "travel letters" that was suppressed by the censor): "wouldn't it be better to call a halt to our publicity? Why bother? Really, our publicity will lead to nothing."²⁵

Iakushkin's pessimism on this score had by this time been reinforced by further experience. At the end of 1859 he undertook another foray for Ivan Aksakov and the *Russian Colloquy*—this time through Vladimir and Iaroslavl' provinces to towns like

Vologda and Kostroma, hitherto neglected by students of folklore. But this trip had a more "political" aspect to it as well: Aksakov wanted Iakushkin to observe and record the economic situation of the peasantry and their communal forms of organization and self-government, subjects in which Pavel Ivanovich was himself becoming more and more interested.

The expedition never really got off the ground. A continuing problem was Iakushkin's lack of proper papers. Aksakov attempted to facilitate matters by giving him a letter to the vice-governor of Iaroslavl' province, an old schoolfellow. But Aksakov's old friend failed him; becoming nervous about such a notorious guest, he showed his letter to the governor, A. P. Buturlin. The latter, who regarded Aksakov as a greater red than Iakushkin, immediately flew into a rage. When he had calmed down, he called in Iakushkin and told him to get out of the province forthwith and not to come back until he had a proper passport. And thus the trip ended. In addition, Buturlin sent both Aksakov's letter and one of his own to the minister of the interior, in whose spacious offices Provincial Secretary Iakushkin was becoming increasingly well known.

Several other developments should be noted in connection with the interrupted excursions in 1859-60. One was the appearance, in the aftermath of the Pskov Affair, of several "False Iakushkins." The phenomenon of the Pretender is an important one in Russian history. The most renowned Pretenders generally appeared at the head of rebellious peasant and cossack forces in times when the authority of the government (but not the idea of the Tsar) had been deeply shaken in the countryside. The False Iakushkins, however, were different from the False Dmitrys and False Peters of the past. They appear to have been people who thought to extricate themselves from difficulties in the provinces by proclaiming that they were the now-notorious Provincial Secretary Iakushkin. Presumably they hoped that the name alone (and the threat of more liberal publicity) would cause their tormentors to release them without further ado.

Another footnote to the Pskov Affair was the appearance of a picture postcard of Iakushkin, bearing the name Emel'ian Puga-

chëv, leader of the last of the great peasant uprisings. No one seems to know exactly how this confusion arose, but by the mid-1860s Leskov found that pictures of Iakushkin were selling in Paris as "Pougatscheff." And that, clearly, was how official Russia was coming to regard him.

Finally, the adventures of Pavel Ivanovich seem to have spurred the government to enact stricter laws controlling the movements of folklorists and other "scholars" in the countryside. It is fascinating, tedious, and extraordinary to watch the huge, cumbersome bureaucratic machinery of Russia swing slowly, almost imperceptibly, into action on this secondary question, at a time when the life-and-death matter of peasant Emancipation was evolving toward its final conclusion. Cabinet members came together; the Tsar participated in the bureaucratic minuet; ink flowed in rivers. The final result was embodied in a circular from the minister of the interior, issued on January 4, 1860. In essence it declared that only officially sanctioned learned societies could send agents into the countryside, and then only with much registration, preliminary and otherwise. So much for Ivan Aksakov and the *Russian Colloquy*, if not for Provincial Secretary Iakushkin.

Iakushkin had his say on the Emancipation in his brilliant "Great Is the God of the Russian Land," a heavily censored version of which appeared in Nekrasov's *Contemporary* in 1863. Like virtually everything else that he wrote, it is a sketchy "letter from rural Russia." Its point: How did the various segments of Russian society respond to the prospect of Emancipation? What did the peasants think about their promised "liberty"? How did average representatives of various groups (state peasants, gentry "liberals" and conservatives, the serfs themselves) respond to successive steps? And behind the confused and bitterly humorous scenes and dialogues lay Pavel Ivanovich's eternal theme: landlords and peasants live in different worlds and cannot understand each other.

The landlords with whom Iakushkin talked tended to respond, at first, quite simply: "I don't like it—they're taking my Van'ka away. What will I do?" Serfdom was seen as wrong, but "Why can't they abolish it after I'm gone?"

At a somewhat later stage, provincial gentry were supposed to draft their own Emancipation projects, which would then be submitted to government commissions. Iakushkin attended one such session and found Semën Petrovich reading his draft to an audience of one (Pëtr Semënovich) while everyone else was having a buffet lunch. A few people had drafted projects, but the audience was nonexistent.

"Why is only Pëtr Semënovich listening to Semën Petrovich?" inquired Iakushkin of a man standing at the bar.

"He has to listen," replied the man laconically. It turned out that Pëtr Semënovich owed money to Semën Petrovich.

Iakushkin was quite unsentimental, too, in his description of "the people." He related how the state peasants often regarded themselves as not really peasants at all; he reported on how a group of peasants who had recently been privately freed by their owner told him knowingly that "you can't manage the peasant without a stick."

The most stinging passages were undoubtedly those which described the attitudes of gentry "liberals." Their speeches were generous and full of high-flown sentiment, but these gentlemen believed in "the rule of law." Since the "law" of Russia was utterly alien and incomprehensible to the peasants, its "rule" simply meant the crudest kind of class justice. In these passages, Iakushkin abandoned the casual, half-mocking reportorial style usual to him and spoke directly and with a bitter passion to his audience. Here, for a moment, is the radical moral indignation of the Russian intelligentsia, pure and unalloyed.

Among the funniest and most pathetic passages in "Great Is the God" pertain to the peasant attempts to interpret the final Emancipation settlement. To ensure its utter unintelligibility to the peasant, it was often delivered to various localities only in fragments, so that when it was read aloud in the church, whole sections had to be left out. In one town in Orël province, for instance, twenty copies of the rules pertaining to freed serfs in Bessarabia arrived, instead of one copy of the entire edict. In another town they received the supplementary rules relating to serfs who had been assigned to privately owned mining installa-

tions. And to assess the full impact of the arrival of a document of this kind, one must remember that it was being delivered to people who either had absolutely no idea of what to expect or expected something utterly different.

Sometimes it was the priest who was chosen to read the edict; sometimes the job was given to a peasant who was trusted by the community, often someone whose literacy was uncertain. In one village the edict was read by a gardener who was supposed to have "studied in Moscow." He was given a dram of vodka and a ruble and told to begin. It took him two days to read the "liberty" (as the peasants universally referred to the edict). The people listened and slept in shifts.

"And what did you understand of it?" Iakushkin inquired of some peasants who had been through this ordeal.

"What did we understand?" they replied. "That liberty is written on four-columned pages."

Iakushkin then asked them why they had gone through with the reading when no one understood anything.

"But so, dear friend, the law commands," they replied. "And we, dear friend, have nothing against the law."

Even when the peasants understood the literal meaning of the words, the possibilities for confusion were almost unlimited. A group approached Iakushkin and showed him a place where the edict read something to the effect that the peasants ought to cultivate the land and "the fruits of the earth" would be theirs. Iakushkin could not convince them that the passage did not mean that they should have their landlord's orchards—they knew perfectly well that the "fruits" were in those orchards.

On another occasion, an aged priest reading the edict hesitated over the word "overshadow" in the text. If you divide the two syllables of the Russian word, it sounds as if you are saying "about hay." The priest then got the word correctly and went on. But the peasants were convinced that there was something "about hay" in the "liberty" that the priest did not want them to hear. So they gave the edict to the deacon, but he could not find anything about hay either. Then the angry and suspicious peasants, Iakushkin reported, "took the mani-

festó, left the church, and began to read it themselves."

Iakushkin also discussed the extremely delicate subject of peasant revolt in "Great Is the God"—and more extensively in a separate article, "Riots in Russia," published in 1866.²⁶ His treatment of the peasant "riot" (he uses the German word *Bunt*, which had become common in Russian) is related to a common literary theme of the period: the "imaginary riot." The notion of the imaginary riot was employed by writers like Leskov and Pisemsky, who were consciously opposing the radical Populist view that the Russian countryside was the arena of a bitter class struggle between gentry and peasants. Leskov viewed the rural scene as more or less harmonious, but was troubled by the fact that good men on both "sides" often could not understand each other: the grotesque misunderstandings that resulted could then escalate into riots that were "imaginary" in the sense that their sole cause was the lack of a common language between the two parties.

Iakushkin accepted the idea of the imaginary riot, but he was under no illusion about any basic community of interest, gentry benevolence, or peasant "loyalty." He agreed with Leskov and Pisemsky that the gulf between the village and the manor was so great as virtually to preclude communication, but he located the "cause" of peasant disorder as much in gentry rapaciousness and bureaucratic brutality as in any failure of communication between the two worlds. How, he asked, could the peasant be brought to accept the alien "law" of the landlord's world, when so often in the past it has been simply an official seal on exploitation and gentry arbitrariness? The landlord's law generally arrived in the village like an avalanche, overwhelming whatever customary arrangements might have prevailed there. In such a situation, nomenclature took on a surreal significance for the peasant, as he sought to understand his relationship to an alien government. Iakushkin reported how one "riot" originated in the wish of a village of state peasants to be called, as they had been in the past, "one-homesteaders," a designation that had become obsolete by the mid-1850s. The peasants did not clearly understand what the terms actually meant, although they

(rightly) associated the older category in a vague fashion with better days. When the village met and solemnly confirmed its desire to revert to the "one-homestead" designation, the soldiers were called.

Peasant distrust of the landlord even (or perhaps particularly) when he came bringing gifts was brilliantly sketched in Iakushkin's anecdote about the gentleman who came down from town to make "improvements" in several of his villages. A meeting was called, at which the master appeared.

"Well, brothers, how do you live?" the master inquired of the meeting in a friendly way.

"Thank you, little father, by your mercy we live—glory to God," answered someone in the crowd.

"Live well, brothers," answered the master heartily. "You live well now, you will live well—I'm going to make things even better."

At once, Iakushkin reported, everyone at the meeting fell on his knees.

"Little father! Don't make things better. Even now, things are so good that life is short; if they get better, it will be impossible to live at all."

So when a "misunderstanding" developed, or the landlord broke faith with his peasants, he might define the situation as a "riot." The decision was his because he was the one with access to the world of police and soldiers. The peasants had only the option of digging their heels in and resisting passively ("rioting on their knees," as the phrase had it), or at the most taking a wild swing at the nearest tormentor. "It is remarkable," concluded Iakushkin, "how educated people try to give a particular sense to everything. Misunderstandings, requests—it's all *Bunt* to them. There's no other word in their dictionary."

Thus, according to Iakushkin, it was the landlords and officials closest to the peasants who generally "began" the riots—by pronouncing the word "riot," whether out of fear or calculation. Iakushkin underlined the conservatism (or realism, depending on your point of view) of this interpretation by adding that the kinds of radical manifestos and proclamations that had recently

begun to appear "had not the slightest influence on the people." They were written by people who were strangers to the world of the village, and at times in a style so bad that even people with some education could not fathom what they meant. Iakushkin's treatment of riot and revolt among the peasants disappointed Soviet historians, who view the aroused countryside as a powerful force—perhaps *the* powerful force—propelling the government into a period of major reform. Nor do they care for Iakushkin's denigration of radical manifestos and brochures, the careful analysis of which is such an important part of their work.

By the summer of 1864, Iákushkin had become extremely well known to the Third Section, as well as to the Ministry of the Interior and various police chiefs—Gempel' in Pskov, Annenkov in St. Petersburg. The Pskov Affair back in 1859 had been followed by his expulsion from Iaroslavl' province; in the wake of these adventures, Pavel Ivanovich had been subjected to constant, if not very intensive, police surveillance, and his articles were subjected to the most intensive scrutiny by the censor. Some, like "Great Is the God of the Russian Land," were eventually allowed to appear; others were suppressed altogether. As early as 1860, for instance, Iakushkin had been contemplating an article on the recruitment of peasant soldiers. It finally appeared, in a truncated form, in a military magazine, the *Russian Veteran* (*Russkii invalid*), in 1864.²⁷ When an officer acquaintance with whom he had discussed the idea years earlier complimented him on the "truth" of the finished product, Pavel Ivanovich laughed angrily. "You're full of it, brother," he said. "Half of it was scratched out. What kind of truth is half a child? I spit on that kind of truth."

The year 1864 brought Iakushkin's relationship with the police to a boil. First there was the business of Chernyshevsky's civil execution in May. Then, two months later, an agent assigned to Iakushkin intercepted a letter to Alexander Herzen in London. Herzen had commented extensively on the Pskov Affair in the *Bell* and had also described Iakushkin's farewell to Chernyshevsky. Now proof of a connection was established:

Iakushkin's letter spoke of an article he was to have submitted to the *Bell* but had decided to publish elsewhere. Balandin believes that the projected article probably had to do with the unpolitical subject of Bessonov's edition of Kireevsky's songs. His surmise is very likely correct, but the police did not know this. And the further question remained, both for them and for the historian: How much other information had Iakushkin sent to Herzen?²⁸

The Third Section was not able to take immediate action against Iakushkin; the discovery of his correspondence with Herzen took place just as he was setting off for the big Nizhny Novgorod Fair, which he was to cover for Boborykin's journal, the *Library for Reading*. It was his scandalous behavior at the fair, on top of his long record as the incarnation of disorder and the friend of state criminals, that led to his ruin.

Iakushkin left for the fair on August 1, with the Third Section still undecided as to what precisely to do with him. The Nizhny Novgorod Fair was one of the biggest and most impressive of the Russian trade fairs; it had also become an event much patronized by writers, artists, and students of "popular life." Iakushkin traveled there with Boborykin, but their very different styles of life dictated that they find separate quarters at the fair.

The Third Section, having ensured that Iakushkin would be under police surveillance at the fair (through a letter to Ogarëv, the provincial governor), sat back and waited. On August 23, the first report came in. It was short and sweet. "Iakushkin arrived here," wrote the unknown agent,

with inadequate identification papers, given to him by the Orël police on the occasion of the loss of his card. He staggers through the taverns, is constantly drunk, and was brought to the police station, where he remained for two hours. He tells everything exaggeratedly and wishes to write his Pskov article No. 2 again, but he has only himself to blame. Then, continuing his drunken wanderings, he began to appear at the court of arbitration for fighting and disputing; he plays at pitch-and-toss, etc. Things have come to such a pass that Ogarëv has expelled him from Nizhnii-Novgorod Province.²⁹

Pavel Ivanovich, clearly, was in search of the Russian people in his usual way. A local folklorist and antiquarian, A. S. Gatsissky, gives us a more intimate look at one of the less sordid scenes. "We got into a boat," he reported,

with the idea of going to the camp of the Volga fisherman; however, we did not get to the camp, but confined ourselves to a trip along the Volga, which had lost, however, much of its poetic charm, since the dust of the fair hung over it in a thick cloud. The soul of our small company was Iakushkin, who enjoyed himself particularly at the expense of the economist [Vladimir Pavlovich] Bezobrazov, who had located, in his recent researches, a dock—on an unnavigable river. There was, however, a serious point to Iakushkin's sparkling mockery: we study popular life without seeing it at all; the research is undertaken by gentlemen in white gloves, who approach their subject with their noses in the air. At the end, far removed from it—as they had been at first—they see in it what they wish—as they had at first—rather than what exists in reality.

"Yes," said Iakushkin, "here we have these overdressed researchers who learn about popular life in three days and write it up in one—nothing to it. Here we've gone to the fishermen, didn't see them at all—but look! Tomorrow Vladimir Pavlovich will be describing in detail his conclusions about fishing on the Volga, the fishermen's way of life and—if someone will only explain it to him—the difference between the Volga word for fisherman and the regular one."³⁰

Apart from his general disorderly behavior, two characteristic events led directly to Iakushkin's departure from the fair. On the first occasion, he got drunk at a dinner (held to bring together the merchants and the men of letters who had come to the fair), interrupted the speaker, and had to be removed from the hall. The second incident has been preserved in the stern prose of Colonel Koptev of the Third Section:

On August 17, Iakushkin met Captain Perfil'ev in Nikita Egorov's hotel. Neither of them knew the other, and the occasion for a conversation arose when Captain Perfil'ev was talking to Nikita Egorov (the former chef of the Nizhnii-Novgorod Club). He was asking him how business had been since he had been managing the hotel and maintaining a table at the railroad station, when the drunken Iakushkin,

with a glass of vodka in his hand, interrupted the conversation, saying to Perfil'ev "why do you say *ty* to Nikita when he says *Vy* to you? My ears can't stand it." At this, Perfil'ev guessed that he was speaking with Iakushkin and had a conversation with him, in order to gain some understanding of this personality. When he had gone, Nikita Egorov told Perfil'ev that Iakushkin would insolently approach guests who were completely unknown to him, in order that he and they might go into other rooms and amuse themselves with garrulous drunkenness.³¹

On that very evening, Colonel Koptev concluded, Iakushkin had had a similar encounter with another officer, who had reported him to the governor on the following morning; this incident led directly to Iakushkin's expulsion from the fair and the province.

Pavel Ivanovich, in fact, had already had an interview with Governor Ogarëv several days earlier, apparently after the governor had received letters from the Third Section about him and perhaps from the Ministry of the Interior as well. Ogarëv subsequently gave a sober and somewhat guilty account of why he had not taken stronger action on the Iakushkin case on this prior occasion. Iakushkin had convincingly explained to him, he said, the necessity of his peasant costume and his frequenting of taverns, with respect to his work. He had told the governor of his commission from Boborykin and promised to behave himself in the future.

V. I. Mel'nikov, an agent of the Ministry of the Interior, who was working with the governor on other business, gave a very different version of the interview, which he had from Iakushkin himself. According to this (admittedly tainted) version, Ogarëv had "gone into ecstasies" when he learned that Iakushkin collected folk songs; he had dashed to the piano and accompanied his disorderly guest in spirited renditions of songs. Upon parting, he had embraced Iakushkin warmly and said fatuously, "I love learned men." The scene reads like something out of Gogol, but Ogarëv was a good-hearted, emotional, and not very clever man—something like Mel'nikov's version might well have occurred if Iakushkin had turned on the charm.

But the governor was not to be had twice. Following Pavel

Ivanovich's new escapades, Ogarëv sent him back to St. Petersburg in the company of two agents, where, it was now clear, the Third Section was eager to see him. In doing so, Ogarëv cited Iakushkin's lack of proper documents, his riotous behavior, and gave extremely vague hints about inciting the peasants. He also recommended that Iakushkin be confined to his "customary place of residence" and not be allowed to wander freely around. This viewpoint was shared by N. V. Mezentsov, the director and chief of staff of the Third Section, and he wrote to this effect to Annenkov, the Petersburg police chief—himself an old friend of Pavel Ivanovich. After spending two weeks in the hospital, apparently for delirium tremens, Pavel Ivanovich remained in the capital, under strict police supervision, until he was sent to his mother's estate in April 1865. He was then forbidden to leave Saburovo; he was to remain there, still under the watchful eyes of the police.

Balandin does not entirely concur with what might be called the cumulative theory of Iakushkin's exile to Saburovo. He has combed the archives and the memoir literature of the period for indications of new outrages—and he has found a few, for Iakushkin lived his usual Petersburg life between his return from the fair and his departure for Saburovo.³² But the truth seems to be that the authorities just wanted to be rid of him. They—rightly—regarded him as incorrigible; he was a permanent source of disorder. His way of life, his very existence in the capital, was a public criticism of "official Russia," a slap in the face of right-thinking people, and a bad example to the young. Furthermore, the government—with the Emancipation now an accomplished fact—was moving to suppress much of the dissent it had tolerated a few years earlier as a kind of necessary, if distasteful, pressure on the most conservative elements of society. And at the same time, opposition to the government was taking more extreme and organized forms. Given this situation, what could be more reasonable than to ship Pavel Ivanovich Iakushkin to the provinces and keep him there? There he could parade around in his unsightly rags to his heart's content, and the danger and offensiveness of the performance would be greatly reduced.

According to Annenkov, the idea came from Iakushkin himself, in mid-March 1865.³³ The reason alleged for the move to Saburovo was that it would be easier for him to maintain himself there than in the capital. We have no way of knowing if Iakushkin actually made such a request. In view of his unmistakable distaste for the project at every later stage, it seems more likely that Annenkov developed it himself out of a complaint by Iakushkin that he was having trouble making ends meet in the capital; after all, his wandering had been his sole source of income.

In any event, Pavel Ivanovich departed by train for Orël and Saburovo on April 22, 1865, under guard, and arrived safely and without incident several days later. His departure was a gloomy one. He was worried about the reaction of his mother when he turned up as a political exile; although he did not say so, he was probably just as worried about what it would be like to live under her roof for the foreseeable future.

An observer in St. Petersburg police headquarters described Pavel Ivanovich's final appearance in those familiar surroundings. The two bulky knapsacks of A. P. Shchapov (that other notorious troublemaker, also being sent into exile) had just been carted off, when Iakushkin appeared "with a little bundle under his arm." Turning to the duty officer, he announced "loudly and carelessly, 'I have the honor to present myself. Here I am, ready for whatever Palestine you have in mind.' Two policemen marched over to him: 'Where, Mr. Iakushkin, are your things?' " Thus the ritual question was asked, as it always was by friends and enemies alike! And Pavel Ivanovich replied as he always did, "'here they are'—indicating the bundle—'I am all here.'"

" 'Then you will go with them,' said the duty officer, pointing to the policemen.

" 'Gladly. I'm bored with your Peter [St. Petersburg] and pleased to be travelling at government expense.' " And they went out.³⁴

A group of Iakushkin's friends had gathered at Kozhanchikov's bookstore, hoping for a final farewell. A small parcel was waiting for him, containing medicine and a little money. But the carriage

drove past them down the Nevsky Prospekt without stopping; the friends merely caught a glimpse of him, between the guards.

Before moving on to the melancholy history of Pavel Ivanovich's last years, a few more words ought to be said about what Soviet historians call, with characteristic abstractness, Iakushkin's "sociopolitical views." His contemporaries gravitated toward one of two interpretations, neither of them very well defined. One of them was that Iakushkin was not political at all. You could argue for a "man of God," a Holy Fool, a "typical broad Russian nature"; if your view of Pavel Ivanovich was negative, he could be a bum, a tramp, or a "good-for-nothing." This was how Pisemsky regarded him. Leskov, the most articulate proponent of the "unpolitical" view, was extremely unsympathetic to the radicals of the 1860s and no doubt disposed to minimize his friend's intellectual affinity with them. For example, when a split developed between the two leading "progressive" journals of the day—the *Annals of the Fatherland* and the *Contemporary*, which, under the powerful influence of Chernyshevsky, was moving to the Left—according to Leskov, Iakushkin not only refused to take sides, break off relations, and do all the things that radical intellectuals were expected to do under these circumstances, but refused even to understand the disagreement. Here were the "little German books" again!

The other theory was that at one time Pavel Ivanovich had been a Slavophile (or at least "under the influence of" the Slavophiles) and that later he had somehow become a radical. This view seems to have been based more on an analysis of his journalism and his "public career" than the unpolitical thesis, although some people who knew him well, like S. V. Maksimov, announced vaguely that he had been "deeply influenced" by the Slavophiles, and further muddled the waters by adding that he was, of course, not a Slavophile himself in any "narrow" sense. All very unhelpful.

The historian who follows the life and adventures of Iakushkin is struck by a marked shift in the political views of his *friends*, if not in his own. By 1861, Pavel Ivanovich was pretty well out of

touch with anyone who might be called a Slavophile. There were, of course, nonpolitical reasons for this: his quarrel with the Elagin family over the Kireevsky song collection; his removal from editorial responsibility; the fact that by 1860 there was no longer a real Slavophile "group" or even a coherent Slavophile point of view, as there had been in the 1840s and throughout most of the 1850s. Although Iakushkin continued to correspond with his old teacher Pogodin, he was not close to him, and he seems to have had nothing to do with Ivan Aksakov after 1861.

We have no evidence of any kind that Pavel Ivanovich deliberately broke off relations with nonradicals at the time of Emancipation. Rather, it became progressively harder for anybody except the increasingly radical and "Populist" intelligentsia to appreciate his work and even to be friendly with him personally. Before, the Tory democracy and orientation toward the peasantry that were characteristic of classical Slavophilism—to say nothing of its historical and folkloric interests—had at least given Pavel Ivanovich points of personal and intellectual contact here. But after the death of the Kireevsky brothers and Khomiakov, the intellectual content of Slavophilism became more and more difficult to distinguish from vulgar Russian nationalism—both radical and religious—and from Pan-Slavism. As the Slavophile impulse was weakened and distorted, it lost its basic hostility to the established order, along with its coherence.

(The other forms of "conservatism" with which Pavel Ivanovich came in contact had no intellectual content at all: they could be summed up by such slogans as "Serfdom is immoral, but Emancipation is too dangerous now" or, more simply, "Stop!" These kinds of conservatism Iakushkin encountered in the police stations of Pskov and St. Petersburg, and in the provincial gentry assemblies where he observed the progress of the Emancipation. "Conservatives" of this stripe were not attracted by anything about Pavel Ivanovich. Their attitude was well summed up by the words of the indignant general who found Iakushkin's presence at the opera in peasant costume "inconvenient.")

Then, too, there was Iakushkin's realism. To describe peasant Russia in the 1860s was to indict official Russia. Who read and was

moved by such indictments? The radical sympathizers with Chernyshevsky, who were devoted to the literature of "unmasking." Who was really interested in the realities of rural Russia? Who "cared about" the peasants (or professed to)? Mostly, after 1860, the young *narodniki*, some of whom were developing the ideas of Herzen and Chernyshevsky into a full-blown revolutionary ideology. It was they who were interested in the peasants' communal way of life: in the mir, in how an artel of fishermen really worked, in the attitude of the peasant toward the land.

And Pavel Ivanovich himself was changed by the Emancipation and the social radicalism that developed with it. His historical and antiquarian interests receded into the background; the romance of picturesque "Old Russia" was overshadowed by the iniquities of the present. He became less of a pure reporter and more the peasants' advocate before the bar of public opinion. And as he moved in this direction, he found his audience taking shape around him. Radicals like Nekrasov and Chernyshevsky were recruiting for their journals in this period, in part because of their growing estrangement from writers like Leskov and Turgenev, who were more moderate politically and unwilling to submit to the utilitarian and propagandistic spirit emanating from the *Contemporary*, the *Spark*, and the *Whistle*. As Iakushkin's audience changed and developed, its demands pushed him farther in the same direction. He had never much cared for people who called themselves "liberals," anyway—with their tendency toward a complacent "moderation," their hypocrisy, and, above all, their Westernism and lack of sympathy for the values of rural Russia.

And of course "official Russia" helped his evolution along by rejecting him, by spying on him, by throwing him into prison, by posturing before him in military uniforms, clanking its medals menacingly. How could Iakushkin not have felt that to a large extent the enemies of the peasant had become his as well?

Still, there were limits to how far to the left Iakushkin could move. Even the most zealous Soviet scholars concede that he never became a revolutionary activist, although they hope (and sometimes persuade themselves to believe) that he distributed

revolutionary propaganda. In May 1862, for instance, Iakushkin went by train from Moscow to Leo Tolstoy's estate, Yasnaya Polyana, between Tula and Orël. Apparently traveling with Iakushkin was a radical student; the Third Section subsequently received a denunciation from a passenger, Prince Evgeny Cherkassky, according to whom Iakushkin and the student had offered him a "proclamation." Several Soviet historians have speculated that the proclamation was none other than Zaichnevsky's extremist, Jacobin *Young Russia* manifesto.³⁵

Their interpretation of the episode is wildly improbable. Iakushkin's *Weltanschauung* had nothing in common with the bloody fantasies of *Young Russia*. But even more significantly, *if* Iakushkin (or anyone else) had been distributing *Young Russia*, he certainly would not have handed it out jokingly to Prince Evgeny Cherkassky on the train. Even Pavel Ivanovich would have had more sense than that. Nor are we certain that Iakushkin and the student had not just met on the train; we do not even know for a fact that what they were handing out was radical literature. It is curious that the conclusions of sober Soviet scholars often resemble those of the tsarist police agents, for which they have such contempt. Both groups show an almost desperate anxiety to prove that the objects of their concern are dangerous revolutionaries.

Iakushkin, in fact, expressed his firm conviction that the radical propaganda distributed in the countryside was for the most part worthless and unintelligible to the peasants. He had an anti-intellectual streak and more than once intimated that the radical intelligentsia was almost as out of touch with village realities as the official Russia it was trying to change. Had he ever turned his realistic eye on the radical intelligentsia—as Pisemsky did—he might have produced something pretty scalding. But he did not, and his abstention was in a way a political decision.

Serious revolutionaries, of course, did not trust Pavel Ivanovich—and with reason! How could a man as notorious as Iakushkin, one who called attention to himself so spectacularly, be an effective member of a revolutionary underground? I. A. Khudiakov, a fellow folklorist and a real revolutionary, liked and ad-

mired Iakushkin, who, he felt, "had done much good." But he noted regretfully that nothing serious could be entrusted to a man who drank like that.

Another radical activist, N. V. Shelgunov, had an interesting and acute view of Iakushkin. Shelgunov saw him as essentially trapped between Slavophilism and Populism—which accounted for his passivity and lack of any real political program (beyond "what the people want," and so on). Iakushkin, said Shelgunov, abandoned Moscow for St. Petersburg, but he never entirely escaped from Moscow or really knew what to do in St. Petersburg. Thus, in his contradictions, he represented the period 1855–61. People like Iakushkin had to give way to what Shelgunov rather guardedly called "practical Populism"—by which he meant revolutionary Populism. Shelgunov did not even consider Iakushkin a "realist"—presumably because Pavel Ivanovich did not regard the peasant as a revolutionary force in Russia. For Shelgunov and those like him, the period when it was sufficient to "unmask" and "expose" Russian reality ended in the early 1860s.

Somewhat apart from the question of Iakushkin's politics or lack of them is the matter of his symbolic significance to the young radicals in the 1860s. Gleb Uspensky, the noted radical writer (like Iakushkin a realist, even a pessimist), believed that he was something of a bellwether to young men of the period who were beginning to turn to the peasants—to study their folklore, to help them make a revolution, but perhaps above all to find out from them how to live. In his "Memoirs of a Former Student," one Vladimir Sorokin wrote about the impression that Iakushkin and his Pskov adventure had made upon him in his adolescence. After Iakushkin had first interested him in rural Russia, wrote Sorokin, "a great many of our comrades traveled through the countryside in the summer, collected folksongs, tales and popular traditions there, studied the people's way of life, taught them to read and write."³⁶

For some of these young men, their fascination with village life was a pleasant episode in their student years that left them with no more than a few memories and a vague sympathy for an alien

and exotic kind of existence. Yet when one considers the pervasive idealization of the peasant, so characteristic of educated Russian society in the latter nineteenth century, one is forced to recognize the significance of even these fleeting experiences of late adolescence. Not only Russian radicalism developed a strong peasant orientation in this period; Russian "liberals" and reactionaries often shared with them a hatred of something that they called the "bourgeoisie" and the capitalism and individualism of the "West." And this romance with the peasantry (usually carried on from afar, to be sure) played a fateful role in Russian political and economic development right up until 1917.

Of course, it was really to the young radicals, the future *narodniki*, that Pavel Ivanovich could appear as a possible model, as the harbinger of a new identity, almost as a "new man." The only thing he could not give them was a political program, but by the time of Chernyshevsky there was no lack of ideas on that front. But he conveyed the *image*, the way of life, the style of the *narodnik*, and his personal failure foreshadows the failure of Russian Populism.

The final seven years of Iakushkin's life were grim ones. Deprived of both his St. Petersburg friends and the possibility of travel, he fell prey to depression, illness, loneliness, and the consolations of the bottle. His relations with his mother were especially agonizing for him, as his correspondence with old Professor Pogodin makes clear. "I could not tell her why I was brought here," he wrote to Pogodin, "and my mother, as you know, is not only my mother, but a most respectable lady. Can there be a worse punishment than to quarrel with one's family, with one's mother? And I am punished with that punishment."³⁷ Praskov'ia Faleevna could not understand her son at all. She must have thought often of her own long struggle for respectability, economic success, and a place in the world. And with those battles virtually won, her son first revealed his disgusting tendency to "revert" (or so it must have appeared to her) and then became a "state criminal." Nor could he offer any account of himself that would have begun to appease her. The running of the estate was

more and more burdensome and difficult, and here was Pavel Ivanovich, forty-three years old, dressed like a peasant, sick, alcoholic, and under police surveillance, moping around Saburovo. Useless, incomprehensible, and self-destructive.

During his three years at Saburovo, Iakushkin published a few pieces in various journals; his life gave him ample time to write. The first half of "Riots in Russia" appeared in the third number of the *Contemporary* after considerable difficulties with the censorship. In 1868, the *Annals of the Fatherland* published a bitter and pessimistic sketch entitled "Clean Teeth or They'll Call You a Peasant."³⁸ The title has a double meaning: "cleaning teeth" also means hitting someone in the teeth, which was an approach favored by both gentry and peasants in rural Russia. Iakushkin met a peasant schoolboy on the road who had misunderstood the phrase from one of his books, but he and other peasants assured Pavel Ivanovich that "cleaning people's teeth" was the way to get ahead.

Pavel Ivanovich's growing isolation from Russian intellectual and social life is attested to by his correspondence, which grew in volume after 1865 (a kind of evidence in itself) but declined in interest. Two requests are repeated over and over again in the letters he wrote both from Saburovo and from his subsequent place of exile on the northern shore of the Caspian Sea: send money and send books (and periodicals). He wrote to old Pogodin, he wrote to Aleksandr Ostrovsky, he wrote to Nekrasov; his correspondence with the latter in particular is almost devoid of content, save for terse descriptions of financial distress and intellectual isolation.

As his domestic unhappiness and his ennui deepened, he drank harder and more purposefully, which led, in turn, to further deterioration in his health. He suffered increasingly from catarrh and soon conceived the project of going to Moscow for treatment; even before the year 1865 was out, he had written to Annenkov in St. Petersburg, asking for permission. Despite Pavel Ivanovich's overriding desire to escape from Saburovo (which played an important part in everything he said or did), his medical complaint was genuine.

Iakushkin's request went from Annenkov back to the local authorities in Orël, back to St. Petersburg, and back to Orël, in characteristically time-consuming fashion. It was finally turned down by the minister of the interior himself, partly because of the new fear of, and hostility toward, radicalism, brought on by Karakozov's attempted assassination of Alexander II on April 4, 1866. Iakushkin also wrote, without success, to the Third Section and to his old acquaintance, Governor Ogarëv of Nizhny Novgorod. His mother wrote to the governor of Orël province to the same effect, but her letter was never answered.

By the end of 1866, Iakushkin appears to have given up the attempt to achieve his aim directly; instead, he set out to get permission for a short trip into the neighboring district of Mtsensk to consult his younger brother, Viktor, who was practicing medicine there.* "Again," Balandin notes, "the bureaucratic machine was set in motion."³⁹ The governor's office in Orël, the Third Section in St. Petersburg, and the Ministry of the Interior solemnly deliberated and consulted. On March 25, 1867, Pavel Ivanovich was given permission to make the trip, provided that he was kept under close surveillance by the police of the two districts.

The results of the government's bureaucratic indulgence were, perhaps, predictable. Pavel Ivanovich did no more than touch base with his brother. He refused to indicate a regular place of residence to the local authorities, resumed his customary nomadic existence, and soon turned up in Orël, where the police picked him up, drunk in the street. He refused to return to Saburovo and expressed his determination to continue his "treatment" in Moscow. On April 26, he was brought back to his mother by two police agents. The whole affair was carefully memorialized by the Orël police department in a document resoundingly entitled "On the Unwillingness of Provincial Secretary Iakushkin to Leave the Town of Orël."

Back at Saburovo, Pavel Ivanovich renewed his efforts, writing letter after weary letter. The year dragged on. When it became

*It may have been Viktor Iakushkin upon whom Turgenev based Bazarov in *Fathers and Children*.

unmistakably clear that Moscow was not a possibility, he asked for Riazan'; his mother offered to guarantee him two hundred rubles a year support. But the minister of the interior, in St. Petersburg, was not to be moved. He saw no reason for the change, and he was unwilling, he said, to burden the governor of Riazan' province with the trouble and expense of looking after a difficult man who had no local connections or "interests."

In his despair, Iakushkin even hoped to be formally tried by the courts—anything to achieve some kind of resolution to his "case." Whether the idea originated at Saburovo or in St. Petersburg, nothing finally came of it. He wrote repeatedly to Pogodin, his most influential remaining friend, begging him to do all he could to have him sent somewhere, "anywhere," away from Saburovo.

Then, in February 1868, Iakushkin simply appeared in the governor's reception room in Orël. "Do what you like with me," he announced with miserable defiance. "If you take me back to the country, I'll run away again in two hours."⁴⁰ By this time, the authorities, too, were ready for a policy change—largely for reasons of fatigue. Governor M. N. Longinov of Orël wrote a notably nasty letter to the minister of the interior, Valuev, about Iakushkin's bad influence throughout the province, and there appeared to be general agreement that exile to a remote part of the empire should be the next step. The ministry suggested Astrakhan province, and a small town called Krasnyi Iar, in the Volga littoral near Astrakhan, was decided upon. After spending a few days in the hospital at Orël, Iakushkin—accompanied by his usual two-man escort—left for the Caspian, via Voronezh.

Iakushkin described the lengthy trip in his last published set of "travel letters." From Voronezh, he and his escort traveled down the Don, crossing over to the Volga at the city of Tsaritsyn and continuing by boat to Astrakhan. He was delighted to be on the road again, even under these circumstances, and the letters exude much of his old zest, albeit with a perceptible undercurrent of bitterness about his fate and a marked dislike of his police escort.⁴¹

The journey provided Iakushkin's most sustained contact with

cossacks, and it is scarcely surprising that he found them most congenial. They were independent and democratic and possessed a natural and winning courtesy. Their sense of human dignity was derived, he believed, from a solid sense of their own worth—prerequisite for recognizing the dignity of someone else. The cossacks had escaped not only serfdom but its crippling and long-lived psychological consequences.

The most interesting conversations between Pavel Ivanovich and his cossack traveling companions centered around the great peasant rebels Stenka Razin and Pugachëv. The letters—which he jotted down in a third-class railroad car between Voronezh and Tsaritsyn—are among the most valuable evidence on popular attitudes toward them, a century after Pugachëv was drawn and quartered.⁴²

Pugachëv was described as a great warrior, a Don Cossack and a friend of the people who crossed himself “the old way”—a reference to his sympathy for Old Believers, who supported his rebellion in great numbers. He was a just man, but the justice for his enemies was summary—a wink of his eye and they would swing. Stenka Razin, to Iakushkin’s cossack informants, was a more complex figure, toward whom there was greater ambivalence. Like Pugachëv, he was a great fighter, but he was also a “heretic”—that is, a magician. The social revolutionary motif emerges clearly with respect to both men, who championed the poor peasant, mistreated or ruined by the landowner, but Pugachëv was not described as a pagan and magician. When Iakushkin asked one of his cossack traveling companions what kind of a “heretic” Razin was, he was answered as follows:

This is what kind. They were going to put him in prison. Good. They bring Stenka to the prison. “Your health, brothers!” he shouts to the prisoners in the stocks. Hello, our father, Stepan Timofeevich! For everyone knew him already. “Why are you sitting here? It’s time to be getting out.” “But how can we get out,” say the prisoners, “we can’t manage it ourselves. But by your wisdom?” “By my wisdom, if you please, by mine.” He lies down, rests for a little, gets up. “Give me,” he says, “the charcoal.” And he takes this charcoal, draws a boat on the wall with this charcoal, puts the prisoners in this boat, splashes

the water; the river flows away from the prison to the Volga itself. Stenka and his boys burst out singing—right to the Volga.⁴³

No one can stand before Stenka: he becomes virtual lord of Astrakhan, terrorizes the governor, and conducts his own rather rapacious foreign relations with Persia. But Stenka is a democrat, a lover of Russia and his free life on the Volga. When he tires of the daughter of the sultan of Persia (he is also a great womanizer), he dumps her in the Volga, jewels and all, and sails back to Russia.

Stenka was also a great enemy of the Orthodox Church—more so than Pugachëv and later Robin Hood types—like the bandit known as Trishka the Siberian, whom Iakushkin also discusses. Stenka's hostility to the Church went beyond Robin Hood's hostility to the "fat priest," for Jolly Robin was no sorcerer or enemy of Christianity. "He was such a heretic," continued Iakushkin's cossack, "he bewitched all Astrakhan, he held everyone in thrall, except one bishop."

The bishop in Astrakhan was then Joseph; Joseph began to talk to Razin: "Fear God! Stop, Stenka, your hereticking!" "Be silent," shouted Stenka Razin, "be silent, father! It's none of your business." The bishop to Stenka again: "it's a great sin to live in heresy." But Stenka sticks to his guns: "Be silent, father! Don't meddle where you're not asked. I'll smite you, bishop," he says. The bishop has his and Stenka his. The bishop again to Stenka Razin: "Think of your soul, how it must answer to God in the other world." Stenka winked to his men, and they took him to the fortress, on to the wall, and from those walls they threw him to the cossacks, on to their spears. Thus Bishop Joseph gave up his soul to God.⁴⁴

The anecdotes about Stenka and the Church were told and received with real awe and some mixed emotion.

Iakushkin was much less well disposed toward the Jews he encountered on the trip (and elsewhere) than he was toward the cossacks. He was aware that the Jews in Russia had been badly mistreated, and, in his opinion, there was such a thing as a "good Jew"—an *evrei*—as well as the "Yid"—the *zhid*. But most Jews seem to have inspired in him an almost physical loathing. He was not in the least interested in them or in their way of life; in

general, Iakushkin showed almost none of the sensitive curiosity about non-Russian nationalities that he displayed toward his own people. He was clearly disposed to consider the peasant's hostility toward the Jewish tavernkeeper as sensible and well founded as his attitude toward the gentry landowner.

Iakushkin arrived in Krasnyi Iar on April 29, 1868. The final decision as to the precise location of his place of residence within the province lay with the governor. It has been suggested that Iakushkin's conduct in Astrakhan (peasant costume, leaving the city without permission, and so on) persuaded the governor that he should not be allowed to stay in the capital. Balandin appears to have shown, however, that the decision to get him out of Astrakhan was made almost immediately upon his arrival, on the basis of his record rather than any fresh exploits.⁴⁵ So he found himself—quite simply—at the end of the world. Although the agony of living under his mother's roof was now ended, he had traded his life in what was, after all, a relatively populous central Russian province, within a few days' journey of Moscow, for the almost total isolation of a tiny fishing community on an island in the bleak and savage salt marshes of the northern shore of the Caspian. It was only about twenty miles from Astrakhan, but he was not allowed to make the trip even when the road was open—which for large portions of the year it was not. By boat and carriage, the journey took about twelve hours. The mails were inefficient and irregular, and Iakushkin's periodical subscriptions—an increasingly crucial part of his life—were particularly so. For the first twelve months of his stay, not a single issue of the *Annals of the Fatherland* arrived.

As Pavel Ivanovich walked through Krasnyi Iar on his first morning, the realization of his situation began to sink in. He soon saw, as he put it, that his new home differed from all other towns, in that it had no inhabitants. There was simply not a soul to be seen. The windows were shuttered; gates were locked and barred; the only living creatures he saw were crows. The tone of his reflections was bitter in the extreme. When he failed at first to spot the town jail, he began to reflect upon how in Russia one

could deduce nearly all the crucial information about a village, town, or city from its prison facilities: an old town had a jail and a monastery, but a new town had only a jail; the jail in a provincial capital was larger and functioned more complexly than the jail in a district capital; and so on.

Continuing through the silent and deserted streets, he was struck by a "terrible sadness"; he returned to his apartment, but the four bare walls soon drove him out onto the street again. He set off in search of the bazaar, but found that it functioned only irregularly; a little desultory fish-selling was all that took place on most days. The area around the bazaar was surrounded by taverns, most of them empty. How could the invisible population support so many? Where were the patrons that kept them going? Finally his wanderings brought him to the river, where he found "the same deathliness. Several vessels of various types were standing at the bank; several boats were tied up at the bank . . . but as for people, it was as if Mamai* had passed through. There was not a soul to be seen."⁴⁶

Life in Krasnyi Iar was simply unbearable. It was broiling hot for twelve hours and then, abruptly, freezing cold for twelve. Police supervision was constant and intrusive—especially after one of his co-exiles escaped to Geneva. The police had been so fascinated by Pavel Ivanovich that they totally neglected his apparently well-behaved and orderly compatriot, who simply walked away. Above all, there was nothing to do. And so Iakushkin renewed his requests to the Ministry of the Interior for a new location.

The weary round of letter-writing continued. Finally, in May 1870, Iakushkin was transferred from Krasnyi Iar to Enotaevka, a river port north of Astrakhan on the Volga. By this time, he was suffering from chronic fever, rheumatism, and scurvy. His new location was an improvement, but he still had his heart set on Moscow. The Third Section asked the governor of Orël if he would take Iakushkin back, but the governor declined. Praskov'ia Faleevna evidently wanted Pavel Ivanovich back, for

*Mamai was a great Mongol general and the personification to a Russian of destruction and desolation.

Saburovo was sunk in debt, and of the Iakushkin brothers, Aleksandr had been sent to Siberia and Viktor was fatally ill with tuberculosis in Rome.

Apparently convinced that Iakushkin no longer represented a serious danger, the Third Section decided in June 1871 to offer him a choice of where he wanted to live—with only the Moscow and Orël areas excluded. Iakushkin immediately chose Tver', but after official consultation it was decided that Tver' was too near Moscow, so he was transferred to Samara in the fall of 1871.

In Samara, Iakushkin found himself in relatively congenial surroundings for the first time since his departure from St. Petersburg in the spring of 1865. The most important factor was that he had a provincial governor on his side for the first time. Grigory Aksakov, the brother of Ivan Aksakov, Iakushkin's editor and friend, was a cultivated and humane man, sympathetic to folklorists and intellectuals, and a great admirer of Pëtr Kireevsky. Relations between Aksakov and the local intelligentsia were unusually good. He mediated delicately and effectively between Iakushkin and the authorities, citing Iakushkin's now obviously deteriorated health as a convincing argument as to why he should be allowed to remain in Samara, rather than being shipped off to some out-of-the-way village or town.

Pavel Ivanovich found other supporters and well-wishers in Samara. There was Modest Ivanovich Pisarev, an actor of considerable reputation, whose company was performing in Samara with great success; he had known Iakushkin through their mutual friends Apollon Grigor'ev and Aleksandr Ostrovsky. And there was also Veniamin Osipovich Portugalov, who had known Iakushkin at least *en passant* in the mid-1850s in Kharkov. Portugalov, the son of a Jewish merchant, had been drawn into oppositional circles by his perception of the plight of Russian Jewry; he had become a doctor and had spent the decade of the 1860s in exile, with a few months in the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul in 1862. Portugalov had been in Samara for only about six months, after having spent several years in places nearly as

remote and unappetizing as Krasnyi Iar. Although his liberal sympathies appear to have remained strong, his behavior had been correct enough in the eyes of the police for a considerable period; he was removed from surveillance altogether in 1876. Portugalov was serving as an intern in the city hospital, which was run by the newly established zemstvo. He described his meeting with Pavel Ivanovich in the following terms:

One tedious and rainy autumn evening, at the end of September, 1871, the maid *announced* to me that someone had arrived who was neither a *barin* nor a peasant. Receiving the unexpected guest, it was easy to guess the essentials of the situation when the visitor pronounced his celebrated name: Pavel Ivanovich Iakushkin! Within a few minutes, he was already no longer a guest, but a dear member of the family; without ceremony, with easy intimacy, he was telling us the cause of his abrupt appearance.⁴⁷

Iakushkin's living accommodations, arranged by Portugalov and approved by Aksakov, were all that he could have desired. He lived in the hospital but treated it essentially as an apartment, with the proviso that he return by ten in the evening, a measure dictated by his health rather than by reasons of security. So he wrote a bit in the mornings (he started a play), spent whole days with Pisarev's theater company on occasion, but generally based himself at Portugalov's apartment. There he mingled with the "liberal" society of Samara: zemstvo and government officials, journalists, and at least one other political exile, M. D. Muravsky, who had been involved with Portugalov in a rather amateurish "conspiracy" at the University of Kharkov in the 1850s. Unlike Portugalov, Muravsky, who was known as "Uncle Mitrofan," was a real revolutionary. He became an active organizer in Orenburg province, was arrested and tried in the famous "Trial of the 193" in 1878. After receiving a ten-year sentence, he soon died in prison.

So Iakushkin was, however briefly, in his element again. As was usually the case with vaguely Populist circles of this kind, interest in ethnography—and particularly in folk songs—was high. Por-

tugalov remembers Pavel Ivanovich sitting at the piano and singing:

We will drink and we will play
And when death comes we'll die.

And death came all too soon.

Iakushkin enjoyed himself among his new friends, regaled them with accounts of his wanderings, but as usual engaged in no public introspection. If Portugalov is to be believed, Iakushkin pooh-poohed the idea that there had ever been anything political about his life. But if he still had hopes for the future, he said nothing about them, nor did he engage in vain regrets about the past. He took each day as it came, emerging from the hospital, generally, around midday and going to see Pisarev or Portugalov. His wanderlust was either in abeyance or altogether gone. Did he know he was dying?

At the end of November, Iakushkin caught a fever in the hospital and became seriously ill. He hung on for a while, but his constitution was too weak for the ordeal. When Portugalov had first examined him, he had found him suffering from palpitations of the heart, asthma, a terrible cough; at that time, Iakushkin was drinking so much that he simply carried a bottle with him wherever he went, and of course he had been a heavy smoker for many years. In a few days he died—as Portugalov put it, from exhaustion. Upon performing an autopsy, Portugalov found what he thought was “fatty degeneration” of some brain and heart tissue; the heart was also “enclosed in a thick layer of fat.” The lungs were in the worst shape of all: they were simply eaten up with huge, ulcerous sores.

His friends buried him, with as much honor and ceremony as they could muster between them (Pavel Ivanovich, of course, had no resources at all), on January 10, 1872. They even managed music, a highly unusual circumstance at the funeral of a private person.

On the day of the burial, a letter and check for fifty rubles arrived from Nekrasov, who seems to have been uncharacteristi-

cally generous with Iakushkin. Modest Pisarev sent the money back to Nekrasov, with a letter describing Iakushkin's brief life in Samara. Characteristically, Pavel Ivanovich had been much disturbed by two ten-ruble debts that he owed, one in Krasnyi Iar and one in Enotaevak, and Pisarev gave the names of those to whom the money was due to Nekrasov, as he had promised Iakushkin he would. Otherwise, "when I think back on my past," Iakushkin said just before his death, "I cannot reproach myself for anything."⁴⁸